A Refined Explanation of
THE SANUSI CREED
The Foundational Proofs
Shaykh Saʿid Foudah

The Foundational Proofs of Imam al-Sanusi is one of the foundational works in Islamic theology and is considered historically as an elemental text in traditional Islamic education. Studied for centuries and memorized by children throughout the Islamic world, *The Foundational Proofs* offers readers a methodical outline of Islamic doctrine that satisfies the mind and the heart alike. In this age of mass confusion and intellectual malaise, where fundamental Islamic beliefs are misunderstood and credulity is championed as faith, *The Foundational Proofs* explains the tenets of faith and supports them both rationally and textually.

Further enhancing the value of this work is the engaging and relevant additions of Shaykh Saʿid Foudah, one of the world's leading Islamic theologians today, who presents Imam al-Sanusi's work with the interlineal commentary of Imam Ahmad b. ʿIsa al-Ansari and engaging and detailed footnotes collated from a variety of famous commentaries, such as those by Imam al-Bajuri, Imam al-Battawi, Imam al-Sawi, Imam al-Marghani, and others, as well as his own insightful comments.

> "One of the most important tasks for a person to engage in is earnest research into the doctrines of the Islamic faith. That is because the religion of Islam is based upon proofs and sound evidence; it does not contradict science or violate the fundamentals of rationality. Fundamentally, the religion of Islam is based upon rationality, and while it is true that it does not ignore the emotional aspect of religion, faith that is not grounded in the intellect is not considered perfect faith, nor is it capable of withstanding or confronting false beliefs, specious arguments, or the doubts that are spread in each age. Here Shaykh Saʿid Foudah has taken it upon himself to explicate the foundational beliefs of Islam and tenets of faith as based on the intellect, and to demonstrate their congruity with and non-contradiction to the sciences of logic and science."
>
> —*Shaykh Galal al-Jihani*

ISBN 978-90-79294-27-5
9 789079 294275

ISBN 978-90-79294-27-5
SUNNI PUBLICATIONS

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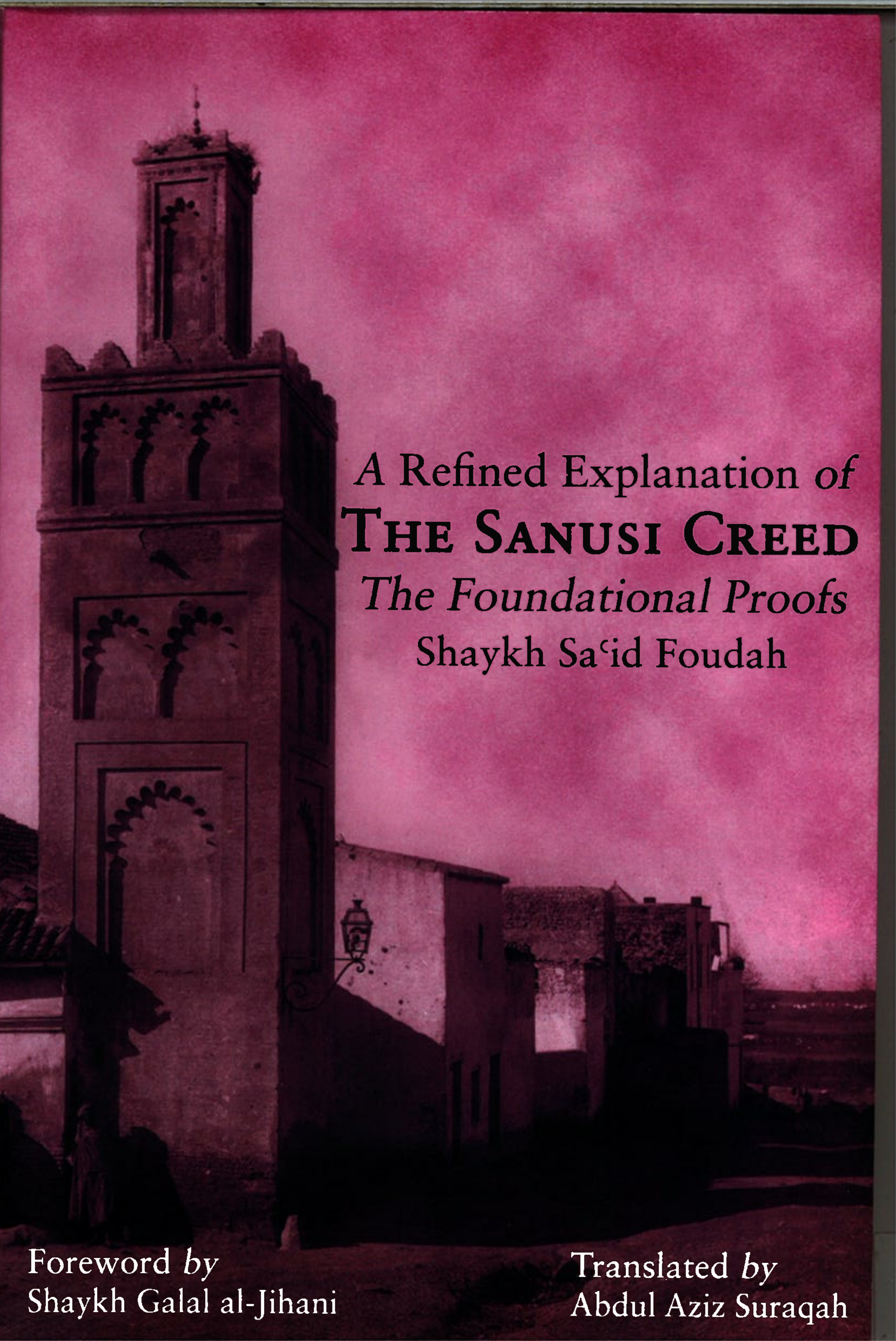
SUNNI



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Foreword *by*
Shaykh Galal al-Jihani

Translated *by*
Abdul Aziz Suraqah

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تهذيب شرح السنوسية
أم البراهين

Shaykh Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Foudah

Foreword & Author's Bibliography *by*
Shaykh Galāl ʿAlī ʿĀmer al-Jihānī

Translated *by* Abdul Aziz Suraqah

Sunni Publications © 2013
Second Edition, October 2018
Second Print, October 2018

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ISBN 978-90-79294-27-5

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Design by
Hakan Çıtlak

Printed by
Bariet Ten Brink
Meppel, Netherlands

Published by
Sunni Publications
Rotterdam, Netherlands
www.sunnipubs.com
info@sunnipubs.com

Contents

About the Author VII
Foreword
By *Shaykh Galāl ʿAlī ʿĀmer al-Jihānī* IX

Prologue 13
Introduction 15
A Brief Biography of
Imam Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Sanūsī 27
The Foundational Proofs [*Umm al-Barāhīn*]
By *Muhammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī al-Ḥasanī* 35

Abridgment of *Imam Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā's* Commentary 49

Chapter I

1.0 Judgments 51
1.1 Rational Judgments 52

Chapter II

2.0 What is Obligatory in the Sacred Law upon every Legally Responsible Person 55
2.1 Knowledge and Conformism 57

Chapter III

3.0 Some of what is Necessary for Allah 61
3.1 The Self-Signifying Attribute 62
3.2 The Negating Attributes 66
3.2.1 Pre-eternality [*qidam*] 66
3.2.2 Endlessness [*baqāʾ*] 69
3.2.3 Absolute Dissimilarity from all Contingent Beings [*mukhālafa lil-ḥawādith*] 70
3.2.4 Self-Subsistence [*qiyām bil-nafs*] 71
3.2.5 Oneness [*waḥdāniyya*] 73
3.3 The Qualitative Attributes [*ṣifāt al-maʿānī*] 77
3.3.1 Omnipotence and Will 80
3.3.2 Knowledge 89
3.3.3 Life 90
3.3.4 Hearing and Sight 91
3.3.5 Speech 93
3.4 The Predicative Attributes [*al-ṣifāt al-maʿnawiyya*] 99

3.4.1 Him being All-Powerful 99
3.4.2 Him being Willing 100
3.4.3 Him being All-Knowing 100
3.4.4 Him being Living 100
3.4.5 Him being All-Hearing 100
3.4.6 Him being All-Seeing 100
3.4.7 Him being Speaking 100
3.5 Some of what is Impossible for Allah, the Sublime and Majestic 103
3.5.1 Non-existence [*'adam*] 103
3.5.2 Contingency [*ḥudūth*] 103
3.5.3 Having an End 104
3.5.4 Having Likeness to Contingencies 104
3.5.5 Inability to Affect what is Possible 122
3.6 What is Possible for Allah, the Exalted 129

Chapter IV

4.0 The Rational Proofs 135
4.1 The Rational Proof for Allah's Existence 135
4.1.1 Affirming Something Additional to a Substance: An Accident 143
4.1.2 Invalidating the View that it is Self-Subsistent, and Invalidating the View that it can Displace itself [2 and 3] 143
4.1.3 Invalidating the view of its Manifestation and Concealment 143
4.1.4 Establishing that it is Impossible for Something Eternal to Cease in its Existence 143
4.1.5 Affirming that Substances are Inseparable from this Addition [the Accident] 143
4.1.6 Establishing the Impossibility of Contingencies without a First [*ḥawādith lā awwal lahā*] 144
4.2 The Rational Proof for Pre-eternality 145
4.3 The Rational Proof for Endlessness 146
4.4 The Rational Proof for Allah's Absolute Dissimilarity from Contingent Beings 147
4.5 The Rational Proof for Allah's Self-Subsistence 149
4.6 The Rational Proof for Allah's Oneness 150
4.7 The Rational Proof that Allah is Described with Omnipotence, Will, Knowledge, and Life 153
4.8 The Rational Proof for Hearing, Sight, and Speech 154

4.9 THE RATIONAL PROOFS FOR THE IMPOSSIBILITIES 154
4.10 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT ALLAH CAN AFFECT THE POSSIBLE OR LEAVE IT 155

CHAPTER V

5.0 THE MESSENGERS —PEACE AND BLESSINGS BE UPON THEM 157
5.1 WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE MESSENGERS ﷺ 164
5.2 WHAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE MESSENGERS ﷺ 166
5.2.1 LYING 166
5.2.2 TREACHERY [*KHIYĀNA*] 166
5.2.3 CONCEALMENT 167
5.2.4 STUPIDITY AND DIM-WITTEDNESS 168
5.3 WHAT IS POSSIBLE FOR THE MESSENGERS ﷺ 168
5.4 THE RATIONAL PROOFS 170
5.4.1 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT TRUTHFULNESS IS NECESSARY FOR THEM ﷺ 170
5.4.2 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT FAITHFULNESS IS NECESSARY FOR THEM ﷺ 173
5.4.3 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT THEY ﷺ CONVEYED WHAT THEY WERE ORDERED TO CONVEY 175
5.4.4 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT INTELLIGENCE AND SAGACITY ARE NECESSARY FOR THEM ﷺ 177
5.4.5 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR THE MESSENGERS ﷺ TO POSSESS INCIDENTAL QUALITIES 177
5.4.6 THE BENEFITS OF THE MESSENGERS ﷺ POSSESSING INCIDENTAL QUALITIES 178

CHAPTER VI

6.0 HOW THE MEANINGS OF THIS DOCTRINE ARE CONTAINED WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE TWO TESTIMONIES: *THERE IS NO GOD BUT ALLAH AND MUHAMMAD IS THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH* 183
6.1 SELF-SUFFICIENCY 184
6.2 LIFE 188
6.3 OMNIPOTENCE 189
6.4 WILL 189
6.5 KNOWLEDGE 189
6.6 ONENESS 190
6.7 MUHAMMAD ﷺ IS THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH 194
6.8 THE ANGELS 197
6.9 THE REVEALED BOOKS 200

6.10 THE LAST DAY 200
6.11 BELIEF IN THE MESSENGERS ﵈ 205

CHAPTER VII

7.0 THE MEANING OF *ĪMĀN* AND *ISLAM* 207

BIBLIOGRAPHY 215
AUTHOR'S BIBLIOGRAPHY BY *SHAYKH GALĀL ʿALĪ ʿĀMER AL-JIHĀNĪ* 217

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

ا/أ/ى	ā	ظ	ẓ
ب	b	ع	ʿ
ت	t	غ	gh
ث	th	ف	f
ج	j	ق	q
ح	ḥ	ك	k
خ	kh	ل	l
د	d	م	m
ذ	dh	ن	n
ر	r	ه	h
ز	z	و	w/ū
س	s	ي	y/ī
ش	sh	ة	a
ص	ṣ	ء	ʾ
ض	ḍ	أ	a
ط	ṭ	إ	i

FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS

﷾	Exalted and Sublime is He
ﷺ	Allah bless him and give him peace
﵇	Peace be upon him
﵈	Peace be upon them
﵁	Allah be pleased with him
﵂	Allah be pleased with her
﵃	Allah be pleased with them

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SHAYKH Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Foudah is a leading scholar of Islamic theology [*ʿilm al-kalām*], logic [*manṭiq*] and legal theory [*uṣūl al-fiqh*], and one of the most meticulous experts of our times on the creed of Ibn Taymiyya.

Shaykh Saʿīd was born in 1967 CE in the city of Haifa, Palestine, and moved at a very young age with his parents to Amman, Jordan, where he still lives and teaches today.

The Shaykh's education began at a very early age. He first studied jurisprudence of the Shāfiʿī school, Arabic grammar, and read most of the Qurʾan with Shaykh Ḥusayn al-Zuhayrī—may Allah have mercy upon him.

Following this, Shaykh Foudah was sent to the expert of canonical readings of the Qurʾan, Shaykh Saʿīd al-ʿAnbaṭāwī—may Allah have mercy upon him. He memorized *Tuḥfa al-Aṭfāl* and *al-Jazariyya* with him, both in *tajwīd* (Qurʾanic elocution), and also read the Qurʾan to him and heard him read it many times to his students. After this, Shaykh Foudah memorized over two thirds of the Qurʾan, *al-Kharīda al-Bahiyya*, and *Jawhara al-Tawḥīd* under his tutelage. During that time, Shaykh Saʿīd al-ʿAnbaṭāwī was not teaching the science of *tawḥīd* (Divine oneness) to anyone besides Shaykh Saʿīd, because of the focus and desire his student had in that subject. Once, he brought [Aḥmad] al-Dardīr's explanation of the *Kharīda* and requested Shaykh Saʿīd to summarize it so it could be of some benefit to the students. By Allah's grace, Shaykh Saʿīd did that and presented it to his teacher who then requested that he start teaching it to the students of knowledge. Under him Shaykh Saʿīd also studied the basics of the recitation of the *warsh* canonical reading by memorizing some small didactic texts, and read Sūra al-Fātiḥa, al-Baqara, and the beginning of Sūra Āl-ʿImrān to him in *warsh*.

Shaykh Saʿīd went on to meet the Shaykh of the Shādhilī Sufi order in Jordan, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Jamāl, who had made firm the Sunni way against those that have deviated from it. Under him, Shaykh Saʿīd studied approximately three fourths of *Kitāb al-Ikhtiyār* of al-Mawṣilī in the tradition of the Ḥanafī school of law.

From amongst his other teachers are the former Mufti of Jordan, Shaykh Nūḥ ʿAlī Salmān al-Quḍāh, with whom he has studied parts of the *Sharḥ al-Minhāj* of Imam al-Nawawī.

Shaykh Saʿīd also met the verifying scholar Shaykh Ibrāhīm Khalīfa who is well versed in the sciences of *tafsīr* (explanation of the Qur'an), *uṣūl al-fiqh* (legal theory), logic, rhetoric, and grammar upon the way of the early scholars. He has given the Shaykh an *ijāza* (formal authorization) in numerous sciences such as *tafsīr*, the explanation of Hadith, the science of *tawḥīd* and its major works, the science of *uṣūl*, logic, rhetoric, and other sciences. He said that he had not given an *ijāza* of its likes to anyone before him. In this *ijāza*, he ordered Shaykh Saʿīd to stand against the innovators and those that oppose the people of the Sunna.

There are many other Shaykhs that Shaykh Saʿīd has met and has a strong connection with such as: Shaykh ʿAbd al-Hādī Kharsa and Shaykh Adīb Kallās—may Allah have mercy upon him—in Syria, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-ʿĀnī (from Iraq)—one of the students of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Mudarris—may Allah have mercy upon him, the Mufti of Egypt, Shaykh ʿAlī Jumʿa, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Bāʿith al-Kittānī and Dr. ʿUmar Kāmil. He has also met the virtuous Shaykh Muhammad Sāliḥ al-Gharsī of Turkey and has written correspondence with Shaykh Wahba al-Ghawjī of Syria who lauded him and his works and requested that he write some books in defence of the way of *Ahl al-Sunna* and refute some who have attacked Imam al-Rāzī. He has also had a long and warm relationship for years with the virtuous Shaykhs; Ḥabīb ʿUmar bin Ḥafīz, Ḥabīb ʿAlī al-Jifrī, and other scholars of Yemen.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

FOREWORD

By *Shaykh Galāl ʿAlī ʿĀmer al-Jihānī*

ALL praise is due to Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon our master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, and upon his Companions and Family. To commence:

One of the most important tasks for a person—whether Muslim or non-Muslim—to engage in is earnest research into the doctrines of the Islamic faith. That is because the religion of Islam is based upon proofs and sound evidence; it does not contradict science or violate the fundamentals of rationality. Today, unfortunately, the stereotypical Muslim is one who bases his faith on emotions and feelings, but it was not always like this. Fundamentally, the religion of Islam is based upon rationality, and while it is true that it does not ignore the emotional aspect of religion, faith that is not grounded in the intellect is not considered perfect faith, nor is it capable of withstanding or confronting false beliefs, specious arguments, or the doubts that are spread in each age.

The author of this work, Shaykh Saʿīd Foudah, a scholar specialized in Islamic theology and legal theory, and a detailed researcher in Islamic philosophy, has taken it upon himself to explicate the foundational beliefs of Islam and tenets of faith as based on the intellect, and to demonstrate their congruity with and non-contradiction to logic and science. This work examines the foundations of Islamic theology through the distinguished efforts of well-recognized theologians in the past and reveals the rational foundations of belief.

One word of caution is due here: This is not a book designed for quick reading and casual perusal; to fully appreciate it and understand what it is saying, the reader must study it in detail. Although the author has endeavoured to simplify the expressions used in this work, in several places there remain abstruse meanings that might prove difficult for the average reader to understand. Hence, it is important that one reads this book in a careful, measured pace.

Furthermore, in some areas of this book the author makes passing mention of different areas of research which might call for additional reading in the more lengthy works in theology, or require one to contact qualified scholars of our time who specialize in theology and doctrine.

If the reader of this work understands the relationship between the tenets of faith and their rational proofs, he or she will be impervious to doubts or misgivings, and if the reader attains mastery of the concepts expressed in this work and others like it, he or she will also be able to confront and counteract every false notion or specious argument raised by people against the Islamic faith—indeed, such a person will be able to deconstruct every philosophy, ideology, or "ism" that stands opposed to the religion.

Shaykh Saʿīd Foudah has written other works detailing the fundamentals of theology and doctrine in order to demonstrate the inadequacy, inability, and weakness of secularism and other modern philosophies, and has refuted some of the old-standing arguments of the philosophers of ancient times that contradict sound reasoning and rational proofs.

With a careful reading of this work the reader will come to realize the weakness of many of the modern sects associated with Islamic thought, but who have fallen prey to certain reprehensible innovations and errors inherited from some of the early Islamic groups, despite the vastness of their numbers in many of the Islamic lands. (Numerical strength is to no avail, since the foundation of a person's belief must be based upon sound proofs and not mere emotions and passionate feelings.)

Books from this genre of Islamic theology in the English language are few and far between, if not non-existent all together. For that reason it is a must to present works of this nature to native English speakers, and to that end the translator of this work has worked hard and done an outstanding job to produce what lies before you. It is important to note, however, that there are several terms used in Islamic theology that do not find adequate English equivalents, and this has made translation of this work difficult in some places.

In closing, we would like to express our thanks and appreciation to the author, Shaykh Sa'īd Foudah, for his efforts in compiling this work, and we ask Allah, the Exalted, to give this book its rightful position in the English speaking lands of the east and west, just as it has had in its native lands, where many scholars have been teaching from it. We would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude and thanks to the translator, who spent many a sleepless night putting its meanings into a clear and flowing style. We wish success for the publisher in producing additional works of benefit for the Muslims, at the head of which are two forthcoming works by the author, translated into English: *A Commentary upon the Epistle of Ibn Kamāl Pāshā, Explaining the Differences between the Ash'arīs and Māturīdīs* [*Sharḥ Risāla Ibn Kamāl Bāshā fī al-Farq bayn al-Ashā'ira wal-Māturīdiyya*], and *A Critique of the Palmyran Creed, Deconstructing Ibn Taymiyya's Theology of Resemblance* [*Naqd al-Risāla al-Tadmuriyya*].

—Galāl al-Jihānī
July 2012, the Netherlands

◆

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PROLOGUE

ALL praise is due to Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon our liege lord Muhammad, the seal of the Prophets and Messengers.

To proceed: knowledge of theology is one of the important branches of knowledge and is by far *the* most important of the Islamic sciences. Theology seeks to explain the creed that a Muslim is obligated to believe with absolute certainty. It also explains the Muslim's position in this universe and what is sought from him in his religion. For this reason it is individually obligatory upon all Muslims [to learn it] according to a minimum level of detail mentioned in the beginning of this book. How can a Muslim who is unaware of his creed and the foundations of his religion be a true Muslim? In a similar comparison, how can a communist be a true communist if he is unaware of the foundations of his ideology?

The science of Divine oneness [*tawḥīd*] is of tremendous importance. It is especially obligatory upon the Muslims in this age to increase their dedication to it, because the common Muslims—nay, even those who claim to be among the elect—have become unaware of even that which is clear-cut and decisive in their creedal doctrine. They no longer distinguish between matters of creed and matters of jurisprudence, between the science of theology and faith and the science that relates to outward action. They are unaware that each science possesses different types of evidence. Acceptable evidence in the former may not be acceptable evidence in the latter, and so on.

In our day and age things are confused and muddled. Confusion exists not only in these two sciences, but also in the other sciences of the Sacred Law that pertain to our religion: from creed and legal theory [*uṣūl*], to Sufism and Hadith, and the other Islamic sciences.

I say that for all who possess the ability, they must make a concerted effort to get out of this sin—a sin in which people have fallen—and expend diligent efforts in taking others out of this sin and error as well. In light of this, I have focused on the book of the erudite Imam al-Sanūsī, whose book is titled: *The Foundational Proofs* [*Umm al-Barāhīn*], as well as its accompanying commentary written by the erudite Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Anṣārī. The first book is a didactic text [*matn*] concerning the doctrine of *Ahl al-Sunna* upon the way of Imam al-Ashʿarī. Its value is truly shown by its own name, for it truly contains the foundational proofs. In truth, the explanation could very well compete with the original work with respect to its goodness, completion, and precise expressions.

Despite that, however, the people in our day and age are unaccustomed to the style of didactic texts and their accompanying commentaries and super-commentaries—despite it being a great and beneficial style for the one who possesses the prerequisites for taking benefit from them. I have interspaced the text within the commentary and added to it many of the beneficial comments mentioned by the commentators, and placed all of this in a new form as if it was a new book on its own.

In this work I have chosen to stick to the words of the two noble Imams as much as possible. I have added a few words from other scholars to achieve two benefits: to draw attention to other authors who wrote commentaries and to present the work in a style that should prove appropriate for people in this day and age. It is my hope that Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, will bring about benefit through this book, and I hope that it is sincerely for His Noble Countenance. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

—Saʿīd Foudah

◆

INTRODUCTION

I WROTE this book in two stages. The first stage was by interspacing the commentary of al-Anṣārī [with al-Sanūsī's text], as I indicated above. The second stage was by adorning it with precious and beneficial quotes taken from many other commentaries and super-commentaries upon the text of *Umm al-Barāhīn*. Those quotes were placed in the footnotes of the book and I arranged them in such as way as to profit the reader with many benefits not found in the main text. I have also added some things that came to my mind at the time, as Allah, the Tremendously Great, made easy for me, and those things were placed either in the footnotes themselves or were interspaced in the main text. I have indicated the authors whose comments I included by placing their initials at the end of the quotes. Those authors [and their works] are the following:

[1] *The Gloss of al-Bājūrī upon 'The Foundational Proofs'* by the erudite Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī, author of the famous gloss upon *Jawhara al-Tawḥīd*. I have pointed out his comments using the letter [*B*]. Despite the relatively small size of this gloss, it is one of the most beneficial glosses available. Al-Bājūrī attempted to include within it everything that would be needed for the reader of the original text. It includes rational jewels that are appropriate for the novice, and even for those at an intermediate level. If someone wishes to suffice with what is obligatory in theology it is possible to suffice with this text and dispense all others.

[2] *Commentary on 'The Foundational Proofs'* by the erudite Sīdī al-Makkī al-Baṭṭāwī. I have pointed out his comments using the letter [*Ṭ*]. This commentary seeks to explain the expressions in the original text, using a style that is easy and very beneficial for novices and young ones, and it contains other benefits as well. The author penned it as an introduction for one who reads Imam al-Sanūsī's commentary on *Umm al-Barāhīn.*

[3] *The Ascent of Glad Tidings: Commentary on the Smallest Sanūsī Creed* by the erudite and verifying scholar, the Shaykh of the Shaykhs of his age and Mufti of the Mālikīs in his domicile, one of the esteemed teachers of Zaytuna [of Tunis], Shaykh Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad al-Mārghanī. He also wrote a beneficial gloss upon *Jawhara al-Tawḥīd* that he mentioned in this commentary. I have pointed out his comments using the letter [*M*]. Because of the difficult matters and lengthy areas of research the author saw, he made his work a refinement of Imam al-Sanūsī's own commentary on the main text. His commentary is neither so lengthy that it bores, nor it is so concise that it is deficient. He placed within it extremely useful notices and mentioned many accurate formulations that illustrate his penetrating insight and comprehensive understanding of both the doctrine and the proofs of *Ahl al-Sunna*. It is one of the best explanations I have seen.

[4] *Commentary on Jawhara al-Tawḥīd* by the erudite Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī. He is the famous author of the gloss upon *al-Sharḥ al-Ṣaghīr* upon *Mukhtaṣar al-Khalīl* of the Mālikī school, as well as the author of the famous gloss upon *al-Jalālayn* the Qur'anic exegesis, and other useful books. I have pointed out his comments using the letter [*Ṣ*]. This work is a beneficial and abridged commentary that is precise in its expressions, yet without complexity. It is possible to suffice with it in this subject and begin with it in instructing students. I have not quoted much from it, not because of it lacking value, but rather for fear of being long-winded.

[5] *Commentary on 'The Foundational Proofs'* by the erudite Shaykh Aḥmad b. 'Īsā al-Anṣārī. This is the commentary upon which I primarily relied in the interspacing [with al-Sanūsī's text] because of its immense precision and the tremendous benefits I saw in it. I mentioned most of the points of benefit he mentioned, and in most cases I attempted to use his exact words. There is very little from it that I chose to omit. The reason why I choose to do an interspaced commentary using this particular work—after reading it and knowing the value it contains—is because of the numerous printing and typographical errors it has that might prevent the reader from proper understanding. I attempted to remove these mistakes and this abridgement has proven beneficial for students of sacred knowledge—by Allah's enabling grace.

[6] The one who hopes that his Lord grants him success and strength, the writer of these lines [i.e., Saʿīd Foudah]. I have pointed out my own comments using the letter [*F*]. I incorporated some comments that I found useful without bothering the reader with further detail. I have not commented heavily upon this work, for the words of the esteemed scholars are adequate for that. Furthermore, this work is not the appropriate place for extreme detail; the comments I selected from the aforementioned commentaries shall suffice the beginner. In addition, I have derived benefit from many works on theology upon the way of *Ahl al-Sunna* written by the virtuous scholars of Islam, some of which I pointed out in the footnotes. I did not quote from the *Commentary on 'The Foundational Proofs'* by the author himself, al-Sanūsī—despite it being the strongest and most valuable commentary without exception—because we have already begun writing a lengthy explanation of this noble text. In that forthcoming work, we shall place the majority of what is contained in al-Sanūsī's own commentaries with summaries, investigations, and additions which the original lacks. We ask Allah, the Exalted to complete it.

I advise the reader to begin by sticking only to the main text [i.e., the commentary of Imam Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Anṣārī]. One should not go straight to the footnotes unless there is a need, especially if reading the book for the first time. This will ensure that one is able to maintain focus and keep away from the distractions and interruptions that occur when jumping between the main text and the footnotes. There is no problem with looking to the footnotes when there is confusion or some other matter, or after completing the main text and understanding its contents.

It is important to recognize that—as our esteemed scholars have informed us—reading a book a second, third, and even a fourth time, is extremely useful. They used to read a book numerous times before moving on to another book. It was mentioned regarding al-Sayyid al-Jurjānī that he read the book on formal logic, the commentary on *al-Maṭālī*, over fourteen times before he went to its author, Quṭb al-Rāzī, to read it to him. The reports and conditions of the jurists regarding their reading of books are too famous to mention. One [of the scholars] was coined the *Minhājī* because of his assiduous and frequent reading of Imam al-Nawawī's *al-Minhāj* in jurisprudence. One of the scholars read al-Shāfiʿī's epistle in legal theory [*al-Risāla*] more than thirty times, and each time he would comprehend something from it that he did not comprehend before.

One of the most important steps needed for this generation is the multiple readings of a single book. Predominantly, those to whom Allah grants success and who pursue sacred knowledge do not know the proper method of learning. You will see such a person start off reading a book, and before he even understands its objectives and comprehends its issues, he moves on to another book, and so on. The end result of this endeavour is that the reader has neither comprehensive knowledge nor firmness in anything found in the books—not to mention the waste of time, effort, and focus it results in.

In the past, the esteemed scholars would advise students to stick to one book while in the beginning stages of their studies, and then afterwards, after having gained proficiency in its issues, they were allowed to move on to another book. This reading of additional books in a single science was one of the most binding of things upon the student who wished to gain mastery in the sciences and reach his utmost—and there is no success but by Allah, the Exalted.

Please note that in this book I highlight some of the well known errors (in certain issues) that some scholars fell into: issues in which they opposed the majority, even though the issues were very obscure and precise, and in which differences do not imply major harm. I make mention of those who refuted them as well as where they went wrong in those matters. My intention is only to bring these issues to the reader's attention, lest one is fooled by the people of innovation, especially the anthropomorphists who ascribe themselves to Imam Aḥmad, even though he is innocent of them. They have exaggerated in their refutations and rebuke of the esteemed Ash'arīs and Māturīdīs. In their rebuke they followed a lowly method, sometimes claiming that these scholars recanted from the Ash'arī school. They instil within naïve people the erroneous impression that these scholars somehow "returned" to the claimants' own anthropomorphic beliefs. Allah forbid that these virtuous scholars, by whom Allah guarded the religion, would go down that mean path.

Sometimes the anthropomorphists claim that these scholars contradicted themselves, even though there was no contradiction at all; rather, it is but their love for sowing baseless doubts. It is only the weakness of their intellects that led them to make these claims. If only they were to observe fairness they would realize that it is the boon of *Ahl al-Sunna*—the Ash'arīs—that they point out the mistakes into which some scholars have fallen. No other group shares with them in this point. They are the unveiling critics of the errors. Had they not brought attention to such mistakes, a novice beginner would perhaps be misled due to the popularity of the one who initially made the mistake. Exalted is He who refused to place infallibility in anything save His Book and His Prophets!

Even though we point out their errors, we do not detract from their lofty positions, even though they might have erred in a few issues, for we constantly keep in mind the scope of their tremendous efforts and the great service they provided in the path of defending the creed of Islam in the face of the innovators, be they the anthropomorphist rabble rousers and those who follow them among the Ḥanbalīs,[1] or those who ascribe themselves to the Salaf [predecessors]—even though the Salaf are innocent of them.

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[1] Do not suppose, dear reader, that *all* of the Ḥanbalīs are anthropomorphists. Among them are anthropomorphists, such as al-Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā, Ibn al-Zāghūnī, and Ibn Qudāma. Their anthropomorphism was less than that of Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn al-Qayyim, and others. Among the Ḥanbalīs are those who declare Allah exaltedly transcendent above resembling corporeal bodies [*ajsām*] and the creation, such as Imam Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal himself (as stated by the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna*) and Ibn 'Aqīl and the verifying Imam, Ibn al-Jawzī and many others. Even though some anthropomorphists are found in the other juridical schools, their ascription to the Ḥanbalīs is greater and further reaching than the others, and for that reason I mention them to the exclusion of the others. It is possible that some

You should also be aware that one of the distinct and salient features of the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna* is that they bring attention to the errors of their fellow Sunni scholars, as small as those errors might be. You will not find among the anthropomorphists in particular, one who is fair-minded with himself and with others and who will admit to even *some* of the egregious errors into which his leaders fell. Nay, they are keen to deny the attribution of such things to their scholars even if such errors are affirmed, or they attempt to interpret their words in such a way that was not intended by those who initially said them, or other such methods. Nay, they hasten to accuse others of disrespecting the scholars of the Umma. In reality, we are doing nothing more than critiquing the views of an extremely small faction of those who ascribe themselves to the Umma. The real issue is not one respecting or disrespecting the scholars, rather it is an issue of truth and falsehood, right and wrong. The only reason this faction employs these methods is because they follow men—and if their state could speak it would say that they believe those men to be infallible and beyond even what befell the Prophets. As for us, we follow the truth to which the scholars guide us; we do not believe in the holiness of any of our major scholars, nor do we say that it is impossible for them to make mistakes. We do not say they are divinely protected, as this faction says [about their scholars], even if only by their mute expression [*lisān al-ḥāl*].

You should also realize that the real reason why they do not explicitly mention the errors of their highly respected scholars and esteemed figures is because all of their scholars fell into the

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who are unaware might become deceived by seeing their large numbers among the Ḥanbalīs and mistakenly think that the rest of the Ḥanbalīs are like them. You should also be aware that the levels of anthropomorphism vary from one individual [among them] to another. Some, like al-Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā, explicitly negate spatial contact [for Allah with the Throne], while at the same time affirming a place and a limit from one direction. Then there are others, like Ibn Taymiyya, who affirm direction and spatial contact [for Allah with the Throne] as well as a limit from all six directions.

exact same egregious errors. If they were to level a judgment upon one of them, then in reality they would be judging the rest—and this would prove that their entire way is corrupt, deviant, and incoherent.

The opposite is true for *Ahl al-Sunna*, the Ashʿarīs. Their scholars who fell into error were very few in number, and at the same time, the remaining scholars of the school did not leave them or their errors alone; rather, they brought attention to the errors in which those scholars fell while at the same time maintaining respect for them and openly declaring their virtue. The recognized virtue of these scholars did not prevent the others from judging them with having fallen into error in a particular issue. This is the real reason why the anthropomorphists do not openly mention or correct those who fell into error in their ranks.

As for *Ahl al-Sunna*, this hindrance is not found with them at all, for they are fully aware that they are commanded to defend the doctrine of Islam and not the doctrine of so-and-so—some of whom are even called the Shaykhs of Islam! The scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna* know that their return is to Allah and not to one of the sultans or kings. The state of the anthropomorphists has become one of fear from openly declaring the truth for the sake of safeguarding their Shaykhs and their worldly positions—and this is not something strange for them.

One the other hand, what *is* extremely strange is to see the scholars who ascribe themselves to the way of *Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jamāʿa* falling prey to trepidation and fear, afraid to defend the doctrine of this religion in the face of this materialist and anthropomorphic onslaught that has now come to dominate the minds of many of the common folk and elite. These [fearful] scholars see the dangerous penetration of this sick ideology that opposes the doctrine of Islam, yet they are completely paralyzed. Not a single one among them—save he upon whom Allah bestows His mercy—can even say that this belief is opposed to the doctrine of the people of truth and the doctrine of Islam. They are afraid of even this minute critique; but to contrast that, we see in the past how the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna* were the masters of critique and refuting opponents and the people of innovation.

That may have been the state of *Ahl al-Sunna* in the past, but in modern times, we see that they are the most fearful of people in critiquing others. In most instances this fear of theirs goes back to their own very real and palpable ignorance of their doctrine and the basis upon which it rests. Most of their Shaykhs now suffice themselves with a general knowledge of theology and they do not go into expansive detail with this noble science: a science that the verifying scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna* have stated to be the pivot upon which all other sciences revolve. We know that the way of general knowledge is but for the common man so as to fulfil what is minimally obligatory upon him with regards to this science. With that being said, you should be shocked about the one whose sole focus [in theology] is to suffice himself with [written works on theology] that were originally written for the common folk and laymen, and who shuns the [works] that will elevate him to the rank of the verifying scholars in this most important of Islamic sciences! If this is one's state, then of course it is completely natural for him to abstain from exposing the theological corruption of others, for in reality he does not know with sure knowledge that the corruptions into which others have fallen are in fact corruptions! How can he oppose them when he does not know with certainty that what he believes is in fact the truth? Nay, most of them believe by way of conjecture.

Because of this situation, many of those who ascribe themselves to *Ahl al-Sunna* have adopted for themselves a strange way: they sit by, letting each person hold his own views in theology. The immense harms found in this way are too clear to warrant explanation.

In contradistinction to them we see a school of thought that was bar none, the weakest Islamic school of thought: the way of anthropomorphism, the way of the *Ḥashawiyya* (crass literalists) and the way of resemblance [between Allah and the creation]. Those who ascribed themselves to this school in the past generations were too afraid to express their beliefs openly; most of the time they would employ indirect allusions and ambiguous statements that were shared between them and others, so as to provide them a way out and save themselves if they were asked. This group used to affirm a direction for Allah and call it *'uluw* (loftiness/highness). They would say: "Allah is high." No one differs regarding general highness; however, this group used this general word and meant by it a physical direction. They used to describe Allah with the properties of corporeal bodies [*tajsīm*] and call Him "The One of Tremendous Rank' ['*Iẓam al-Qadr*], knowing that this is agreed upon by all people. When these anthropomorphists would employ the word "rank" [*qadr*], they would mean size, confinement, and place.[2] The Muslims who declare Allah exaltedly transcendent employ the word "rank" and intend by it nobility and the all-encompassing attributes such as omnipotence, knowledge, and the belief that nothing escapes the control of Allah, the Exalted. They also intended by it His transcendence in His reality and existence.

In the past, the crass *Ḥashawī* rabble rousers were too afraid to openly and explicitly declare their belief that Allah, the Exalted, possesses bodily appendages, parts, and extremities. These days, however, they explicitly declare their belief in such matters and pull no punches. Furthermore, they try to refute their opponents among the people of truth and disparage them, labelling them as *Jahmīs*,[3] atheists,[4] and people of negation. In fact, one of their senior most scholars, to whom they have given the appellation "Shaykh al-Islam," has explicitly stated that the Sacred Law has *not* deemed resemblance [between Allah and the creation] and those who do so [*mushabbiha*] blameworthy! The examples that illustrate just how the scales have turned in this age are too many to mention in this limited space.

None of this would have occurred and found a firm footing were it not for the weakness of those who ascribe themselves to *Ahl al-Sunna*, and their lack of command and mastery in their theology, and their attachment to the life of this world. As a consequence, they have paid the ultimate price for gaining the pleasure of so-and-so and avoiding the anger of so-and-so. They are not looking at the pleasure of Allah or His anger. They have become extremely proficient in justifying this stance of theirs: a stance in which they remain silent and do not refute the way of the anthropomorphists. We give special mention to the way of the anthropomorphists here because they are now predominant in many of the Islamic lands.

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[2] Because the word *qadr*, when applied to physical objects, can also mean sum, extent, quantity, amount, and size.—Tr

[3] This is an ascription to Jahm b. Ṣafwān, an extreme denier of Allah's attributes.—Tr

[4] In this context, atheism refers to the implicit belief of those who strip Allah of His Names and attributes. It is taken from the Arabic word *ṭa'tīl*.—Tr

Many scholars in this day and age have avoided refuting the anthropomorphists, and have given themselves many justifications and excuses. For example, they have said that this age is their age—meaning the age of the anthropomorphists—for they possess the material strength which is the biggest cause for the spread of their way. These scholars have also said that, given its dissemination among the common folk and the elite, refuting the anthropomorphists in this day and age might cause turmoil [*fitna*]! So, seeking to flee from this feared turmoil, they will not counter the anthropomorphists. They also say that the followers of these anthropomorphists do not know that their Shaykhs are actual anthropomorphists, so it is inappropriate, they claim, to refute them. Quite the contrary they maintain; they should be taught and dealt with gently and with direction, bit-by-bit. Those who say such things are seemingly unaware that even if these followers do not admit that they themselves are anthropomorphists, their doctrine is in fact the doctrine of the anthropomorphists—if they know that or not. The truth must be made distinct from falsehood, both for them and for others, and this calls for their heads, leaders, and spokespersons to be refuted.

Furthermore, some of these Shaykhs who ascribe themselves to the way of *Ahl al-Sunna* attempt to find excuses for these anthropomorphists, and essentially justify their beliefs. These Shaykhs seemed to have forgotten that even if we agree that the anthropomorphists have excuses, those excuses do not absolve us of the duty to explain that they are false, nor does it pardon us from refuting them, and neither does it pardon them [the anthropomorphists] from attempting to learn the correct doctrine.

These Shaykhs have seemingly forgotten that it is obligatory to investigate the science of Divine oneness [*tawḥīd*] with proofs, and that no one is allowed to say ❴*"We have found our fathers upon a certain way and we are following in their footsteps."*❵

Nay, if someone believes in something false—even if he acquired it from his mother and father—it does not turn truth into falsehood and vice versa.

I am certain that the stances of all of these Shaykhs toward the tribulation of the anthropomorphism that has spread in this day and age is nothing more than a projection of their own fears of being refuted and a manifestation of their own ignorance of the doctrine of *Ahl al-Sunna*. If they truly knew, they would not shrink from the duty of spreading it, nor would they feign retreat in refuting their opponents.

This way of warning from the errors of people no matter what their station may be was the way of *Ahl al-Sunna*. There is no one who is infallible save the Messenger ﷺ. Compliance after sure knowledge is the basis of the science of Divine oneness, for according to the verified and correct view, there is to be no blind conformism in it when one is capable. *Ahl al-Sunna* know that by this they increase themselves in strength and firmness upon the truth, as they know that their end is with Allah and not with anyone from the creation.

A Refined Explanation *of*

THE SANUSI CREED

The Foundational Proofs

تهذيب شرح السنوسية
أم البراهين

Shaykh Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Foudah

A Brief Biography of
Imam Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Sanūsī

This book in front of you is a refinement of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Anṣārī's commentary on *The Foundational Proofs*. This basic didactic text is one of the books that are well considered among *Ahl al-Sunna*. Its original author is one of the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jamāʿa*: Imam Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Sanūsī—may Allah, the Exalted, have mercy upon him.

His Name and Ascription

He is Imam Muhammad b. Yūsuf b. ʿUmar b. Shuʿayb al-Sanūsī. He was famous for the appellation al-Sanūsī, which is a tribe found in the Maghreb.[5] He is also nicknamed al-Ḥasanī in ascription to Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib from his paternal grandmother's side. He is also given the appellation of al-Tilmisānī, in ascription to the city of Tlemcen [Algeria]. He was the scholar of Tlemcen and its righteous one, its ascetic, one of its great scholars—the Shaykh, the multi-talented polymath, the righteous, the abstemious, the devout worshipper, the verifying teacher and humble one: Abī Yaʿqūb Yūsuf. He was born sometime after 830 AH.

His Teachers and Studies

The Shaykh was brought up as a goodly, blessed, virtuous, and pious individual. He took knowledge from a large group [of scholars], among them:

- His father Yūsuf b. ʿUmar
- Shaykh Naṣr al-Zawāwī
- Muhammad b. Tūzit
- The Sayyid and Sharīf from whom he took knowledge of the modes of Qurʾanic recitation, Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf b. Abī al-ʿAbbās b. Muhammad al-Sharīf al-Ḥasanī
- The just scholar, Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Ḥabāb, from whom he learned the astrolabe

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[5] One of the Amazigh tribes of Tlemcen.—Tr.

- Imam Muhammad b. al-ʿAbbās, from whom he learned logic and legal theory
- The jurist al-Jallāb, from whom he learned jurisprudence
- The great saint and righteous man, al-Ḥasan Abarkān al-Rāshidī, many of whose lessons the author attended and from whom he benefited and received many blessings. The Shaykh used to love him, prefer him over others, and pray for him, so Allah brought his inner acumen and prayers to reality.
- The jurist and Hadith master, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Tālūtī, his maternal uncle, from whom he learned *The Epistle* [of Imam al-Shāfiʿī]
- The pious and scrupulous Imam, Abū al-Qāsim al-Kanābashī, from whom he learned the book *al-Irshād* of Abū al-Maʿālī [al-Juwaynī]
- The pious and scrupulous Imam and proof, Abū Zayd al-Thaʿālabī, from whom he learned the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections [of al-Bukhārī and Muslim] and other books of Hadith, after which he received a license to narrate as [his teacher]
- The ascetic and sincere saint, Ibrāhīm al-Tāzī, who invested him with the *khirqa*[6] on behalf of his Shaykhs; he also narrated many *musalsal* traditions[7] and other narrations
- The noble and pious scholar, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Qalṣādī al-Andalūsī, from whom he learned the laws of inheritance and mathematics; he granted the author [al-Sanūsī] a license in all that he narrated from him

In sum, he was a miraculous sign with regards to his knowledge, guidance, righteousness, reputation, renunciation, scrupulousness, and piety.

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[6] The Sufi patchwork cloak symbolizing his investiture into the spiritual path.—Tr

[7] *Musalsal* traditions are traditions in which a teacher narrates a Hadith, saying to his student: "And this is the first Hadith I heard from my own Shaykh."—Tr

HIS STATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND CHARACTER

Al-Sanūsī had the greatest portion of the outward knowledge. He assiduously gathered between its fundamentals and its subsidiary branches. Never would he speak of a branch of knowledge save that those who present would think that he is skilful in no other science than it—especially the science of Divine oneness and the rational sciences. Others may have shared with him in that science; however, he was unsurpassed in the inward spiritual sciences. In fact, he even surpassed the jurists in knowing the solutions to many problematic areas—especially in matters pertaining to Divine oneness.

Never did he study the outward sciences save that he would extract from them sciences of the Hereafter—especially in Qur'anic exegesis and Hadith—for he was strong in his vigilance of Allah, the Exalted. It was as if he directly witnessed the Hereafter. His student, al-Mallālī, once remarked: "I once heard him say: 'There is no science among the outward sciences that causes one to inherit gnosis of Allah quite like the science of Divine oneness. It opens up understanding of all the other sciences. The increase of one's fear [of Allah] is directly proportionate to his knowledge of it [Divine oneness].'"

He was uniquely known for his knowledge of Divine oneness and his books on this topic are sufficient as a testimony to that—especially *The Foundational Proofs*, for nothing comes close to it in the field of theology.

Al-Sanūsī was forbearing and possessed much patience. Sometimes, when he would hear of something he abhorred, he would pretend not to notice it; instead he would smile and show no signs of displeasure upon him. That was his state with regards to everything that angered him; he would not pay it any attention whatsoever. Never would he hold rancour in his heart for anyone, nor would he frown at anyone's face. He would laud and speak kindly to whomever maligned his honour, so much that people would think that his attacker is his friend.

His student, al-Mallālī, said: "I once heard him say: 'One must walk with gentleness and look in front of him lest he kill a creature on the ground.'" Whenever he would see someone violently striking an animal, he would say: "Be gentle, O blessed one!" and he would forbid teachers from striking children.

Al-Mallālī said: "I once heard him say: 'To Allah belongs one hundred portions of mercy; no one has any hope [of attaining any] save the one who moulds himself by showing mercy and pity toward all of creation.'"

HIS DEATH

When he sensed his mortal illness, al-Sanūsī left the mosque and remained in his bed until death overtook him. His sickness lasted ten days. When his death was near, his nephew instructed him to repeat the testimony of faith over and over again. After doing this, al-Sanūsī turned to him and asked: "And is there anything else [besides saying that]?" His daughter said to him: "Go and leave me alone!" He responded: "The Paradise will soon be our gathering place if Allah wills." Before his death, he said: "We ask Him, the Glorified, to grant us and our loved ones the ability to recite the testimony of faith while knowing what it means." He died on Sunday, the 18th of [the month] *Jumāda al-Akhīra* in the year 895 AH. After his death, the people smelled the fragrance of fine musk—may Allah have mercy upon him.

Al-Mallālī, said: "Approximately two years before his death, he informed me that he was fifty-five years old." Al-Tinbuktī said in *Nayl al-Ibtihāj*: "I saw preserved with some scholars that they asked the aforementioned al-Mallālī about the age of the Shaykh, and he replied: 'He died when he was sixty-three years old.' And Allah knows best."

HIS WRITTEN WORKS

Imam al-Sanūsī's written works include: His large commentary on the *Ḥawfiyya* titled *al-Muqarrib al-Mustawfī*. It is large in both size and knowledge, and he wrote it when he was but nineteen years old. When his Shaykh, al-Ḥasan Abarkān saw it, he was amazed by it and ordered al-Sanūsī to conceal it until he reached forty years of age, lest he be afflicted with the evil eye. He said to him: "There is nothing comparable to it as far as I know...," and he prayed for its author.

Another work of his is his major work on theology *al-'Aqīda al-Kubrā* that he named *The Doctrine of the People of Divine Oneness*. He had another work explaining it as well as an intermediate work on theology that he commented on in thirteen notebooks.

This particular work has a good commentary by Shaykh [Muhammad] ʿIllīsh, and al-Sanūsī's own explanation has a wonderful gloss by Shaykh Yāsīn.

Al-Sanūsī wrote *al-Ṣughrā*[8] and its commentary in six notebooks, and it is from the noblest of works in theology to which no other doctrinal work can compare—as he pointed out in his own commentary wherein the Shaykh said: "There is nothing comparable to it as far as I know. He who suffices with it in theology shall find that it is sufficient." I say: This is the truth, for all who read the text shall benefit from what is contained therein, and in the smallest amount of time one will be guided to the clear truth.

Another work of his, an abridged work in theology [*al-ʿAqīda al-Mukhtaṣara*] and its accompanying commentary in four notebooks, is full of benefits and useful points. His work, *al-Muqaddimāt al-Mubayyina*, a commentary of his *al-ʿAqīda al-Ṣughrā*, is comparable to it in both size and content, and it is contained within five notebooks. He also wrote, within two notebooks, a commentary on Allah's Beautiful Names. Within it he explained the meaning of the Supreme Name (Allah) and the slave's portion thereof, and he also explained the praises and glorifications said at the conclusion of the obligatory prayers, and spoke about their wisdoms.

He wrote a commentary on *al-ʿAqīda al-Ḥawḍī* in five notebooks, a large explanation of *al-Jazariyya*[9] that contains many valuable benefits, an abridgment of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* in two volumes that contains good points, and a commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that is called *Mukammil Ikmāl al-Ikmāl*.

He wrote a commentary on al-Burhān al-Biqāʿī's *al-Isāghūjī* text in the field of logic, and it contains much knowledge, and his summary of it is a wonder that surpasses the commentary of al-Khūnajī. As it is known, the text of al-Khūnajī [al-Jumal] is one of the most precise texts in logic. Al-Bājūrī has a good gloss upon this commentary of al-Sanūsī's.

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[8] *Al-Ṣughrā* is also called *The Foundational Proofs*, the refined explanation of which we present here. There is an extremely beneficial gloss upon al-Sanūsī's explanation of *The Foundational Proofs* by al-Dasūqī, and it contains many useful points related to Divine oneness, and has been published.

[9] This is how it appears in the printed biographies, however I think it is the explanation of *al-Jazāʾiriyya*, which is a book on theology.

Al-Sanūsī, also wrote a very useful commentary on the rhyming poem of al-Ḥabbāk on the use of the astrolabe, as well as an explanation of the poetic verses of al-Alīrī in Sufism, and a commentary on the lines that start with: "*Purify yourself with the water of the unseen...*" He wrote an amazing commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that goes up to the chapter: "*Concerning the one who safeguards his religion.*" Al-Sanūsī also has an abridgement of al-Zarkashī's summary of al-Bukhārī, and commentary, within two notebooks, concerning the problematic areas of [*Ṣaḥīḥ*] *al-Bukhārī*.

Al-Tinbuktī said in *Nayl al-Ibtihāj*: "I have seen all of these works." Al-Mallālī added: "Among his written works is another work in theology that he wrote to some pious people. It contains clear-cut and decisive proofs refuting those who affirm the independent efficacy of customary means [*asbāb ʿādiyya*]. He also has a summary of al-Taftazānī's gloss upon *al-Kashhāf* [of al-Zamakhsharī], and a commentary on Ibn Yāsīn's introduction to algebra. He wrote a commentary on al-Khūnajī's work on logic, and a commentary on Ibn ʿArafa's abridgment in which he solved many intricate problems. He once said to me: 'His words are difficult, especially this abridgment. I have experienced great strain in solving its intricacies and in that I sought help in nothing but solitary retreat [*khalwa*].'"

He also authored—but did not complete—a commentary on Ibn Sīna's poem on medicine written in the *rajz* [poetic] meter, a summary on the seven modes of Qur'anic recitation, an unfinished commentary on *al-Shāṭibiyya al-Kubrā*, an unfinished commentary on *al-Waghlīsiyya* in jurisprudence, a poem on the laws of inheritance, an abridgement of al-Muḥāsibī's *al-Riʿāya*, an unfinished abridgement of al-Suhaylī's *al-Rawḍ al-Unuf*, an abridgement of al-Sāḥilī's *Bughya al-Sālik fī Ashraf al-Masālik*, and a commentary on *al-Murshida* and *al-Durr al-Manẓūm* explaining the *Ājurrumiyya*.

He also wrote a commentary on al-ʿAḍud's *Jawāhir al-ʿUlūm* in theology; it was written in the manner of the sages [*ḥukamāʾ*]. It is a superb book; however, it is incredibly difficult and recondite.

He also wrote—but was unable to dedicate all of his time to—a Qur'anic exegesis in three notebooks up to the verse ﴾*And they are the successful...*﴿ [al-Baqara: 5], and an exegesis on Sūra Ṣād and what comes after it.

Al-Mallālī said: "This is what I am aware of regarding his written works in addition to his legal verdicts, letters of advice, letters of correspondence, and exhortations, not to mention his numerous litanies, help for others, and teaching." Al-Tinbuktī said: "I heard that he had a commentary on Ibn al-Ḥājibs work, may Allah allow us to benefit from him."

HIS STUDENTS

Many notables took from him, such as Ibn Ṣa'd, Abū al-Qāsim al-Zawāwī, Ibn Abī Madyan, Shaykh Yaḥyā b. Muhammad, Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Baydarī, Ibn al-'Abbās al-Ṣaghīr, the friend of Allah and sweet basil [*rayḥāna*] of his era, Muhammad al-Qal'ī, as well as Ibrāhīm al-Judayjī, Ibn Malūka, and many other virtuous notables.

This is but a small sample from the fragrant life of this Imam and a small portion of his states. Without doubt, this [small biography] does not do him justice; al-Tinbuktī mentioned that al-Sanūsī's student, al-Mallālī, compiled a large biography of him in approximately sixteen large notebooks. He [al-Tinbuktī] said that he summarized it in one volume that is composed of about three notebooks, and his own work, *Nayl al-Ibtihāj* is only a small portion of that. We did not mention everything found in *Nayl al-Ibtihāj*. May Allah bring benefit through him and his knowledge—*Āmīn*.[10]

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[10] In this brief biography we sufficed ourselves (adding only a small amount of extra material) with what was mentioned by Abū al-'Abbās Sīdī Aḥmad b. Aḥmad b. 'Umar b. Muhammad Uqīt, better known as Bābā al-Tinbuktī [from Timbuktu, Mali]—may Allah have mercy upon him—in his work *Nayl al-Ibtihāj bi-Taṭrīz al-Dībāj*. This is a very good book that contains numerous biographies of scholars from the Mālikī school and many other rare pieces of knowledge. Refer to it. It is found upon the margins of [Ibn Farḥūn al-Māliki's] *al-Dībāj al-Madhhab fī Ma'rifa A'yān al-Madhhab*.

A Refined Explanation *of*

THE SANUSI CREED

The Foundational Proofs

تهذيب شرح السنوسية
أم البراهين

Shaykh Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Foudah

THE FOUNDATIONAL PROOFS
[*UMM AL-BARĀHĪN*]

By *Imam Muhammad b. Yūsuf*
al-Sanūsī al-Ḥasanī

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلهِ. وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ.

All praise is due to Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah.

أِعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْحُكْمَ الْعَقْلِيَّ يَنْحَصِرُ فِي ثَلَاثَةِ أَقْسَامٍ: الْوُجُوبِ، وَالِاسْتِحَالَةِ، وَالْجَوَازِ.

Know that rational judgments are limited to three categories: necessary, impossible, and possible.

فَالْوَاجِبُ: مَالا يُتَصَوَّرُ فِي الْعَقْلِ عَدَمُهُ. وَالْمُسْتَحِيلُ: مَالاَ يُتَصَوَّرُ فِي الْعَقْلِ وُجُودُهُ. وَالْجَائِزُ: مَا يَصِحُّ فِي الْعَقْلِ وَجُودَهُ وَعَدَمُهُ.

The necessary is that whose non-existence the mind cannot conceive; the impossible is that whose existence the mind cannot conceive; and the possible is that whose existence and non-existence the mind can [equally] conceive.

وَيَجِبُ عَلَى كُلِّ مُكَلَّفٍ شَرْعًا أَنْ يَعْرِفَ مَا يَجِبُ فِي حَقِّ مَوْلَانَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ، وَمَا يَسْتَحِيلُ، وَمَا يَجُوزُ.

According to the Sacred Law, it is obligatory upon every legally responsible person to know what is necessary for our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, as well as what is impossible and possible [for Him].

وَكَذَا يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَعْرِفَ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ فِي حَقِّ الرُّسُلِ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ.

It is also obligatory to know these things as they apply to the Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them.

فَمِمَّا يَجِبُ لِمَوْلاَنَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ عِشْرُونَ صِفَةً، وَهِيَ: الْوُجُودُ. وَالْقِدَمُ. وَالْبَقَاءُ. وَمُخَالَفَتُهُ تَعَالَى لِلْحَوَادِثِ. وَقِيَامُهُ تَعَالَى بِنَفْسِهِ: أَيْ لاَ يَفْتَقِرُ إِلَى مَحَلٍّ، وَلاَ مُخَصِّصٍ. وَالْوَحْدَانِيَّةُ: أَيْ لاَ ثَانِيَ لَهُ فِي ذَاتِهِ، وَلاَ فِي صِفَاتِهِ، وَلاَ فِي أَفْعَالِهِ.

Some of what is necessary for our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, are twenty attributes. They are: existence, pre-eternality, endlessness, absolute dissimilarity from all contingent beings, His self-subsistence (which means He is not in need of a locus or a determiner), and [then] oneness (which means there is no second [like] Him in His Entity, attributes, or actions).

فَهذِهِ سِتُّ صِفَاتٍ: اَلأُولَى نَفْسِيَّةٌ، وَهِيَ: الْوُجُودُ. وَالْخَمْسَةُ بَعْدَهَا سَلْبِيَّةٌ.

These are six attributes in total. The first one, existence, is self-signifying, and the remaining attributes are negating.

ثُمَّ يَجِبُ لَهُ تَعَالَى سَبْعُ صِفَاتٍ، تُسَمَّى صِفَاتِ الْمَعَانِي، وَهِيَ: الْقُدْرَةُ، وَالإِرادَةُ: الْمُتَعَلِّقَانِ بِجَمِيعِ الْمُمْكِنَاتِ. وَالْعِلْمُ الْمُتَعَلِّقُ بِجَمِيعِ الْوَاجِبَاتِ، وَالْجَائِزَاتِ، وَالْمُسْتَحِيلاَتُ. وَالْحَيَاةُ، وَهِيَ: لاَ تَتَعَلَّقُ بِشَيْءٍ. وَالسَّمْعُ وَالبصَرُ: الْمُتَعَلِّقَانِ بِجَمِيعِ الْمَوْجُدَاتِ. وَالْكَلاَمُ: الَّذِي لَيْسَ بِحَرْفٍ، وَلاَ صَوْتٍ، وَيَتَعَلَّقُ بِمَا يَتَعَلَّقُ بِهِ الْعِلْمُ مِنَ الْمُتَعَلَّقَاتِ.

Furthermore, there are seven [more] necessary attributes for Him, the Exalted, and they are called qualitative attributes. They are: omnipotence and will (both of which are linked to all possible things), knowledge (which is linked to all necessary, possible, and impossible things), life (which is not linked to anything), then hearing and sight (both of which are linked to all existing things), and then speech that is neither letter or sound (which is linked to that which knowledge is linked).

ثُمَّ سَبْعُ صِفَاتٍ، تُسَمَّى صِفَاتٍ مَعْنَوِيَّةٌ، وَهِيَ: مُلاَزِمَةٌ لِلسَّبْعِ الأُولَى، وَهِيَ: كَوْنهُ تعالى: قادراً. وَمُرِيداً. وَعَالِمًا. وَحَيًّا. وَسَمِيعًا. وَبَصِيراً. وَمُتَكَلِّمًا.

After [these] there are seven attributes called predicative attributes, and they are inherent in the seven attributes mentioned above. They are: Him being All-Powerful, Him being Willing, Him being All-Knowing, Him being Living, Him being All-Hearing, Him being All-Seeing, and Him being Speaking.

وَمِمَّا يَسْتَحِيلُ فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى عِشْرُونَ صِفَةً، وَهِيَ أَضْدَادُ الْعِشْرِينَ الْأُولَى، وَهِيَ: الْعَدَمُ. وَالْحُدُوثُ. وَطُرُوُّ الْعَدَمِ. وَالْمُمَاثَلَةُ لِلْحَوَادِثِ: بِأَنْ يَكُونَ جِرْمًا: أَيْ تَأْخُذَ ذَاتُهُ الْعَلِيَّةُ قَدْراً مِنَ الْفَرَاغِ. أَوْ يَكُونَ عَرَضًا يَقُومُ بِالْجِرْمِ، أَوْ يَكُونَ فِي جِهَةٍ لِلْجِرْمِ، أَوْلَهُ هُوَ جِهَةٌ، أَوْ يَتَقَيَّدَ بِمَكَانٍ، أَوْ زَمَانٍ، أَوْ تَتَّصِفَ ذَاتُهُ الْعَلِيَّةُ بِالْحَوَادِثِ، أَوْ يَتَّصِفَ بِالصِّغَرِ، أَوْ الْكِبَرِ، أَوْ يَتَصَّفَ بِالْأَغْرَاضِ فِي الْأَفْعَالِ أَوْ الْأَحْكَامِ.

And some of what is impossible for Him, the Exalted, are twenty attributes, and they are the opposites of the twenty mentioned earlier. They are: non-existence, contingency, having an end, having likeness to contingencies (such as being a substance whereby His Exalted Entity takes up space, or being an accident that subsists within a substance, or being in a direction with respect to substance, or Him having a direction unto Himself, or Him being restricted to time or space, or that His Exalted Entity is described with contingencies, or that that He is described with smallness or largeness, or that [His] actions and rulings are qualified by motives).

وَكَذَا يَسْتَحِيلُ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى: أَنْ لاَ يَكُونَ قَائِمًا بِنَفْسِهِ، بِأَنْ يَكُونَ صِفَةً يَقُومُ بِمَحلٍ، أَوْ يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى مُخَصِّصٍ.

Likewise, it is impossible for Him, the Exalted, to not be Self-subsistent (such as Him being an attribute that subsists in a locus or standing in need of a determiner).

وَكَذَا يَسْتَحِيلُ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى: أَنْ لاَ يَكُوْنَ وَاحِداً بِأَنْ يَكُونَ مُرَكَّبًا فِي ذَاتِهِ، أَوْ يَكُونَ لَهُ مُمَاثِلٌ فِي ذَاتِهِ، أَوْ صِفَاتِهِ، أَوْ يَكُونَ مَعَهُ فِي الْوُجُودِ مُؤَثِّرٌ فِي فِعْلٍ مِنَ الْأَفْعَالِ.

It is also impossible for Him, the Exalted, to not be One (such as being composite in His Entity, or there being something that resembles Him in His Entity and attributes, or that there be anything besides Him that has independent causation in actions).

وَكَذَا يَسْتَحِيلُ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى: الْعَجْزُ عَنْ مُمْكِنٍ مَّا، وَإِيجَادُ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِ مَعَ كَرَاهَتِهِ لِوُجُودِهِ.

It is also impossible for Him, the Exalted, to be incapable of affecting any given possible thing, or to bring into existence in this world something that He detests and does not want to exist [in other words, something against His will].

أَيْ عَدَمِ إِرَادَتِهِ لَهُ تَعَالَى أَوْ مَعَ الذُّهُولِ، أَوْ الْغَفْلَةِ، أَوْ بِالتَّعْلِيلِ، أَوْ بِالطَّبْعِ.
It is [also impossible for Him to bring anything into existence] through puzzlement, forgetfulness, cause, or nature.

وَكَذَا يَسْتَحِيلُ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى: الجَهْلُ وَمَا فِي مَعْنَاهُ بِمَعْلُومٍ مَّا، وَالمَوْتُ، وَالصَّمَمُ، وَالْعَمى وَالْبَكَمُ.
Likewise, it is impossible for Him, the Exalted, to be ignorant or what shares in its meaning with respect to something that is known, as well as death, deafness, blindness, and dumbness.

وَأَضْدَادُ الصِّفَاتِ المَعْنَوِيَّةِ وَاضِحَةٌ مِنْ هَذِهِ.
And the opposites of the predicative attributes are clear from these.

وَأَمَّا الجَائِزُ فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى: فَفِعْلُ كُلِّ مُمْكِنٍ أَوْ تَرْكُهُ.
As for what is possible with respect to Him, the Exalted, it is for Him to either do or leave every possible thing.

أَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وَجُودِهِ تَعَالَى: فَحُدُوثُ الْعَالَمِ، لأَنَّهُ لَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ مُحْدِثٌ بَلْ حَدَثَ بِنَفْسِهِ لَزِمَ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَحَدُ الأَمْرَيْنِ المُتَسَاوِيَيْنِ مُسَاوِيًا لِصَاحِبِهِ رَاجِحًا عَلَيْهِ بِلاَ سَبَبٍ وَهُوَ مُحَالٌ.
With regard to the [rational] proof of His existence, the Exalted, it is the contingency of the world. For if the world did not have an originator and instead it originated itself, that would mean that one of two things equal to each other is preponderant over the other without an external cause, which is impossible.

وَدَلِيلُ حُدُوثِ الْعَالَمِ مُلاَزَمَتُهُ لِلأَعْرَاضِ الحَادِثَةِ مِنْ: حَرَكَةٍ، أَوْسُكُونٍ أَوْغَيْرِهِمَا، وَمُلاَزِمُ الحَادِثِ حَادِثٌ.

The proof for the world's contingency is it inseparability from emergent accidents such as movement and stillness etc., and that which is inseparable from a contingent is contingent as well.

وَدَلِيلُ حُدُوثِ ٱلأعرَاضِ مُشَاهَدَةُ تَغَيُّرِهَا مِنْ عَدَمٍ إِلَى وَجُودٍ، وَمِنْ وُجُودٍ إِلَى عَدَمٍ.

And the proof for the contingency of accidents is the change that is witnessed in them, such as non-existence to existence, and from existence to non-existence.

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وُجُوبِ الْقِدَمِ لَهُ تَعَالَى: فَلأَنَّهُ لَوْ يَكُنْ قَدِيمًا، لَكَانَ حَادِثًا فَيَفْتَقِرُ إِلَى مُحْدِثٍ، فَيَلْزَمُ الدَّوْرُ، أَوِ التَّسَلْسُلُ.

As for the proof of the necessity of His pre-eternality, Exalted is He: were He not Pre-eternal, He would have been contingent and thus need an originator, and there would be a never ending circle or infinite regress.

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وَجُوبِ الْبَقَاءِ لَهُ تَعَالَى: فَلأَنَّهُ لَوْ أَمْكَنَ أَنْ يَلْحَقَهُ الْعَدَمُ، لاَنْتَفَى عَنْهُ الْقِدَمُ لِكَوْنِ وُجُودِهِ حِينَئِذٍ جَائِزًا لاَ وَاجِبًا، وَالْجَائِزُ لاَ يَكُونُ وُجُودُهُ إِلاَّ حَادِثًا، كَيْفَ! وَقَدْ سَبَقَ قَرِيبًا وُجُوبُ قِدَمِهِ تَعَالَى وَبَقَائِهِ.

As for the proof of the necessity of His endlessness, Exalted is He: if it were possible for Him to be met with non-existence after His existence, pre-eternality would be negated from Him, for His existence in that case would be possible, not necessary, and a possible existence cannot be but contingent. How could this be otherwise when it was just established that His pre-eternality and endlessness, Exalted is He, are necessary?

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وَجُوبِ مُخَالَفَتِهِ تَعَالَى لِلْحَوَادِثِ: فَلأَنَّهُ لَوْ مَاثَلَ شَيْئًا مِنْهَا، لَكَانَ حَادِثًا مِثْلَهَا، وَذَلِكَ مُحَالٌ لِمَا عَرَفْتَ قَبْلُ مِنْ وُجُوبِ قِدَمِهِ تَعَالَى وَبَقَائِهِ.

As for the proof of the necessity of His absolute dissimilarity, Exalted is He, from contingent beings: had He been similar to anything of them, He too would have been contingent, and that is impossible since you have learned earlier that His pre-eternality and endlessness are necessary.

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وَجُوبِ قِيَامِهِ تَعَالَى بِنَفْسِهِ: فَلأَنَّهُ تَعَالَى لَوِ احْتَاجَ إِلَى مَحَلٍّ لَكَانَ صِفَةً، وَالصِّفَةُ لاَ تَتَّصِفُ بِصِفَاتِ المَعَانِي، وَلاَ المَعْنَوِيَّةِ، وَمَوْلاَنَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ يَجِبُ اتِّصَافُهُ بِهِمَا فَلَيْسَ بِصِفَةٍ. وَلَو احْتَاجَ إِلَى مُخَصِّصٍ لَكَانَ حَادِثًا، كَيْفَ! وَقَدْ قَامَ الْبُرْهَانُ عَلَى وُجُوبِ قِدَمِهِ تَعَالَى وَبَقَائِهِ.

As for the proof of the necessity of His self-subsistence, Exalted is He: had He been in need of a locus, He would have been an attribute, and an attribute cannot be qualified by either qualitative or predicative meanings—but our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, must be qualified by these, therefore He is not an attribute. And if He had been in need of a determiner, He would have been contingent. But how can that be, since the proof of the necessity of His pre-eternality and endlessness has been established?

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وُجُوبِ الْوَحْدَانِيَّةِ لَهُ تَعَالَى: فَلأَنَّهُ لَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ وَاحِدًا لَزِمَ أَنْ لاَ يُوجَدَ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الْعَالَمِ لِلُزُومِ عَجْزِهِ حِينَئِذٍ.

As for the proof of the necessity of His oneness, Exalted is He: if He was not One, it would imply that nothing of the world would have existed, for it would imply that He is incapable.

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وَجُوبِ اتِّصَافِهِ تَعَالَى بِالْقُدْرَةِ وَالإِرَادَةِ وَالْعِلْمِ وَالحَيَاةِ: فَلأَنَّهُ لَوِ انْتَفَى شَيْءٌ مِنْهَا لَمَا وَجِدَ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الحَوَادِثِ.

As for the proof of the necessity of His omnipotence, will, knowledge, and life, Exalted is He: had any of these been negated, no contingent being would have existed.

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وَجُوبِ السَّمْعِ لَهُ تَعَالَى وَالْبَصَرِ وَالْكَلاَمِ: فَالْكِتَابُ والسُّنَّة وَالإِجْمَاعُ، وَأَيْضًا لَوْ لَمْ يَتَّصِفْ بِهَا لَزِمَ أَنْ يَتَّصِفَ بِأَضْدَادِهَا، وَهِيَ نَقَائِصُ، وَالنَّقْصُ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى مُحَالٌ.

As for the proof of the necessity of His hearing, sight, and speech, Exalted is He, it is the Book [Qur'an], Sunna, and consensus; in addition, had He not been qualified with these, it would imply that He is qualified by their opposites, which are imperfections, and it is impossible for Him, Exalted is He, to have imperfections.

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ كَوْنِ فِعْلِ الْمُمْكِنَاتِ أَوْ تَرْكِهَا جَائِزًا فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى: فَلأَنَّهُ لَوْ وَجَبَ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى شَيْءٌ مِنْهَا عَقْلاً، أَوِ اسْتَحَالَ عَقْلاً لاَ نْقَلَبَ الْمُمْكِنُ وَاجِبًا أَوْ مُسْتَحِيلاً، وَذَلِكَ لاَ يُعْقَلُ.

As for the proof that performing or leaving possible things is possible for Him, Exalted is He: had any of them been either rationally necessary or impossible, the possible would have turned to something necessary or impossible, and that is inconceivable.

[الرسل عليهم الصلاة والسلام—الواجب في حق الرسل عليهم السلام] وَأَمَّا الرُّسُلُ عَلَيْهِمُ وَالسَّلاَمُ: فَيَجِبُ فِي حَقِّهِمْ: الصِّدْقُ. وَالأَمَانَةُ. وَتَبْلِيغُ مَا أُمِرُوا بِتَبْلِيغِهِ لِلْخَلْقِ.

As for the Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them—what is necessary for them are truthfulness, faithfulness, and conveyance of what they have been ordered to convey to the creation.

وَيَسْتَحِيلُ فِي حَقِّهِمْ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ أَضْدَادُ هذه الصِّفَاتِ، وَهِيَ: الْكَذِبُ. وَالْخِيَانَةُ بِفِعْلِ شَيْءٍ مِمَّا نُهُوا نَهْيَ تَحْرِيمٍ أَوْ كَرَاهَةٍ. أَوْ كِتْمَانُ شَيْءٍ مِمَّا أُمِرُوا بِتَبْلِيغِهِ لِلْخَلْقِ.

The opposites of these qualities are impossible for them—peace and blessings be upon them. They are: lying, treachery (by doing anything they forbade, be it unlawful or detested), or concealment of anything they were ordered to convey to the creation.

وَيَجُوزُ فِي حَقِّهِمْ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ مَا هُوَ مِنَ الأَعْرَاضِ الْبَشَرِيَّةِ الَّتِي لاَ تُؤَدِّي إِلَى نَقْصٍ فِي مَرَاتِبِهِمِ الْعَلِيَّةِ ؛ كَالْمَرَضِ وَنَحْوِهِ.

It is possible for them—peace and blessings be upon them—to be subject to normal human conditions that do not lead to a diminishment of their lofty degrees, such as illness and the like.

أَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وُجُوبِ صِدْقِهِمْ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ: فَلأَنَّهُمْ لَوْ لَمْ يَصْدُقُوا لَلَزِمَ الْكَذِبُ فِي خَبَرِهِ تَعَالَى لِتَصْدِيقِهِ تَعَالَى لَهُمْ بِالْمُعْجِزَةِ النَّازِلَةِ مَنْزِلَةَ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: صَدَقَ عَبْدِي فِي كُلِّ مَا يُبَلِّغُ عَنِّي.

As for the proof of the necessity of their truthfulness—peace and blessings be upon them: had they not spoken the truth it would have implied that Allah lied when confirming their truthfulness via inimitable miracles that take the position of Him saying, "My servant is truthful in everything he conveys from Me."

وَأَمَّا بُرْهَانُ وُجُوبِ ٱلأَمَانَةِ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ: فَلأَنَّهُمْ لَوْ خَانُوا بِفِعْلِ مُحَرَّمٍ، أَوْ مَكْرُوهٍ، لاَ نْقَلَبَ الْمُحَرَّمُ، أَوِ الْمَكْرُوهُ طَاعَةً فِي حَقِّهِمْ، لأَنَّ الله تَعَالَى أَمَرَنَا بِالإِقْتِدَاءِ بِهِمْ فِي أَقْوَالِهِمْ وَأَفْعَالِهِمْ، وَلاَ يَأْمُرُ الله تَعَالَى بِفِعْلِ مُحَرَّمٍ وَلاَ مَكْرُوهٍ. وَهذَا بِعَيْنِهِ هُوَ بُرْهَانُ وُجُوبِ الثَّالِثِ.

As for the proof of the necessity of their faithfulness—peace and blessings be upon them: had they behaved treacherously by committing an unlawful or detestable act, the unlawful or detestable act would have become obedience for them, because Allah, the Exalted, ordered us to emulate them in their statements and actions, and Allah does not order that which is unlawful or detested. And this in itself constitutes the proof for the third quality.

وَأَمَّا دَلِيلُ جَوَازِ ٱلأَعْرَاضِ الْبَشَرِيَّةِ عَلَيْهِمْ: فَمُشَاهَدَةُ وُقُوعِهَا بِهِمْ: إِمَّا لِتَعْظِيمِ أُجُورِهِمْ. أَوْ لِلتَّشْرِيعِ. أَوْ لِلتَّسَلِّي عَنِ الدُّنْيَا. أَوْ لِلتَّنْبِيهِ لِخِسَّةِ قَدْرِهَا عِنْدَ الله تَعَالَى. وَعَدَمِ رِضَاهُ بِهَا دَارَ جَزَاءٍ لأَنْبِيَائِهِ وَأَوْلِيَائِهِ بِاعْتِبَارِ أَحْوَالِهِمْ فِيهَا عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ.

As for the proof of the permissibility of the Prophets experiencing normal human condition—peace and blessings be upon them—it lies in the fact that those conditions have been witnessed from them, [them receiving them] either to magnify their rewards, or to legislate, or to provide solace from the material world, or to bring attention to the paltriness of the world in Allah's sight, Exalted is He, or because Allah is not pleased with it as an abode of recompense for His Prophets and Saints in view of their states therein—peace and blessings be upon them.

وَيَجْمَعُ مَعَانِيَ هٰذِهِ العَقَائِدِ كُلِّهَا قَوْلُ: لاَ إِلٰهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللهِ.
The meanings of all of these beliefs are gathered in the statement *There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.*

إِذْ مَعْنَى الأُلُوهِيَّةِ: اسْتِغْنَاءُ الإِلٰهِ عَنْ كُلِّ مَا سِوَاهُ، وَافْتِقَارُ كُلِّ مَا عَدَاهُ إِلَيْهِ.
That is because the meaning of divinity is for God to be free from needing anything besides Him, while everything besides Him is in need of Him.

فَمَعْنَى لاَ إِلٰهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ: لاَ مُسْتَغْنِي عَنْ كُلِّ مَا سِوَاهُ، وَمُفْتَقِرًا إِلَيْهِ كُلُّ مَا عَدَاهُ إِلاَّ اللهُ تَعَالَى.
Therefore, the meaning of the phrase *There is no god but Allah* is: *There is no one free from needing anything besides Him, while everything besides Allah, the Exalted, is in need of Him.*

أَمَّا اسْتِغْنَاؤُهُ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ عَنْ كُلِّ مَا سِوَاهُ، فَهُوَ يُوجِبُ لَهُ تَعَالَى: الْوُجُودَ، وَالْقِدَمَ، وَالْبَقَاءَ، وَالمُخَالَفَةَ لِلْحَوَادِثِ، وَالْقِيَامَ بِالنَّفْسِ، وَالتَّنَزُّهَ عَنِ النَّقَائِصِ.
As for Him, the Sublime and Majestic, being free of needing anything else besides Him, it necessitates existence, pre-eternality, endlessness, absolute dissimilarity from contingent beings, self-subsistence, and transcendence above imperfections.

وَيَدْخُلُ فِي ذٰلِكَ وُجُوبُ السَّمْعِ لَهُ تَعَالَى وَالْبَصَرِ وَالْكَلاَمِ، إِذْ لَوْ لَمْ تَجِبْ لَهُ هٰذِهِ الصِّفَاتُ لَكَانَ مُحْتَاجًا إِلَى المُحْدِثِ، أَوِ المَحَلِّ، أَوْ مَنْ يَدْفَعُ عَنْهُ النَّقَائِصَ.
This also includes the necessity of His hearing, sight, and speech, Exalted is He, for if these attributes were not necessary, He would have been in need of an originator or locus, or one who could avert from Him imperfections.

وَيُؤْخَذُ مِنْهُ: تَنَزُّهُهُ تَعَالَى عَنِ الأَغْرَاضِ فِي أَفْعَالِهِ وَأَحْكَامِهِ، وَإِلاَّ لَزِمَ افْتِقَارُهُ إِلَى مَا يُحَصِّلُ غَرَضَهُ، كَيْفَ! وَهُوَ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ الْغَنِيُّ عَنْ كُلِّ مَا سِوَاهُ.

It is also inferred from this phrase that Allah is transcendent above motives in His actions and rulings, for if not [negated], it would imply that He stands in need of that which will fulfil His motive. But how can that be when He, the Sublime and Majestic, is free of needing anything else besides Him?

وَيُؤْخَذُ مِنْهُ أَيْضًا: أَنَّهُ لاَ يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى فِعْلُ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْمُمْكِنَاتِ عقلا وَلاَ تَرْكُهُ، إِذْ لَوْ وَجَبَ عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى شَيْءٌ مِنْهَا عَقْلاً كَالثَّوَابِ مَثَلاً، لَكَانَ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ مُفْتَقِرًا إِلَى ذَلِكَ الشَّيْءِ لِيَتَكَمَّلَ بِهِ غَرَضُهُ، إِذْ لاَ يَجِبُ فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى إِلاَّ مَا هُوَ كَمَالٌ لَهُ، كَيْفَ وَهُوَ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ الْغَنِيُّ كُلَّ مَا سِوَاهُ.

From this phrase it is also inferred that it is not necessary for Allah to do or leave a possible act, for if anything of that nature were rationally necessary for Him, the Exalted, such as [the bestowal of] reward, He, the Sublime and Majestic, would have been in need of that thing to complete His objective—hence nothing is necessary for Him except that which entails a perfection for Him. But how can that be, when He, the Sublime and Majestic, is free of needing anything else besides Him?

وَأَمَّا افْتِقَارُ كُلِّ مَا عَدَاهُ إِلَيْهِ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ فَهُوَ يُوجِبُ لَهُ تَعَالَى الْحَيَاةَ، وَعُمُومَ الْقُدْرَةِ وَالْإِرَادَةِ وَالْعِلْمِ، إِذْ لَو انْتَفَى شَيْءٌ مِنْهَا لَمَا أَمْكَنَ أَنْ يُوجَدَ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الْحَوَادِثِ فَلاَ يَفْتَقِرُ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ، كَيْفَ! وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَفْتَقِرُ إِلَيْهِ كُلُّ مَا سِوَاهُ.

As for all else standing in need of Him, the Sublime and Majestic, it necessitates for Him, the Exalted, life, general omnipotence, will, and knowledge. For if any of these were negated it would not have been possible for any contingent thing to exist, as nothing would stand in need of Him. But how can that be, when everything stands in need of Him?

وَيُوجِبُ لَهُ تَعَالَى أَيْضًا: الْوَحْدَانِيةَ، إِذْ لَوْ كَانَ مَعَهُ ثَانٍ فِي الْأُلُوهِيَّةِ لما افْتَقَرَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ لِلُزُومِ عَجْزِهِمَا حِينَئِذٍ، كَيْفَ! وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَفْتَقِرُ إِلَيْهِ كُلُّ مَا سِوَاهُ.

Oneness is also necessary for Him, the Exalted, for if He had a second in divinity nothing would stand in need of Him because with that it implies that both are incapable. But how can that be, when everything stands in need of Him?

وَيُؤْخَذُ مِنْهُ أَيْضًا: حُدُوثُ الْعَالَمِ بِأَسْرِهِ، إِذْ كَانَ شَيْءٌ مِنْهُ قَدِيمًا لَكَانَ ذَلِكَ الشَّيْءُ مُسْتَغْنِيًا عَنْهُ تَعَالَى، كَيْفَ! وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَجِبُ أَنْ يَفْتَقِرَ إِلَيْهِ كُلُّ مَا سِوَاهُ.

From this phrase it is also inferred that the entire world is contingent, for had any part of it been pre-eternal that part would be free of needing Him, the Exalted. But how can that be, when it is necessary that everything stands in need of Him?

وَيُؤْخَذُ مِنْهُ أَيْضًا: أَنَّهُ لاَ تَأْثِيرَ لِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْكَائِنَاتِ فِي أَثَرٍ مَا، وَإِلَّا لَزِمَ أَنْ يَسْتَغْنِيَ ذَلِكَ الْأَثَرُ عَنْ مَوْلاَنَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ، كَيْفَ! وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَفْتَقِرُ إِلَيْهِ كُلُّ مَا سِوَاهُ عُمُومًا.

From this phrase it is also inferred that there is no independent causation for any created thing in its action, for had that been so it would have implied that the action is free of needing our Master, the Sublime and Majestic. But how can that be, when everything stands in need of Him generally?

وَعَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ، هذَا إِنْ قَدَّرْتَ أَنَّ شَيْئًا مِنَ الْكَائِنَاتِ يُؤَثِّرُ بِطَبْعِهِ، وَأَمَّا إِنْ قَدَّرْتَهُ مُؤَثِّرًا بِقُوَّةٍ جَعَلَهَا اللهُ فِيهِ كم يَزْعُمُهُ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ الْجَهَلَةِ فَذَلِكَ مُحَالٌ أَيْضًا، لِأَنَّهُ يَصِيرُ حِينَئِذٍ مَوْلاَنَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ مُفْتَقِرًا فِي إِيجَادِ بَعْضِ الْأَفْعَالِ إِلَى وَاسِطَةٍ، وَذَلِكَ بَاطِلٌ لِمَا عَرَفْتَ مِنْ وُجُوبِ اسْتِغْنَائِهِ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ عَنْ كُلِّ مَا سِوَاهُ.

In any case, this is if you assume that something of created things can bring an effect via its inherent nature; on the other hand, if you assume that its efficacy is through a power that Allah has deposited within it—as many ignorant folk claim—that is also impossible, because in that case our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, would stand in need of an intermediary in order to bring about certain actions, and that is false since you have come to learn that it is necessary that He, the Sublime and Majestic, is free of needing anything besides Himself.

فَقَدْ بَانَ لَكَ تَضَمُّنُ قَوْلِ: لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ لِلأَقْسَامِ الثَّلاَثَةِ الَّتِي يَجِبُ عَلَى الْمُكَلَّفِ مَعْرِفَتُهَا فِي حَقِّ مَوْلاَنَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ، وَهِيَ: مَا يَجِبُ فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى، وَمَا يَسْتَحِيلُ، وَمَا يَجُوزُ.

Therefore, it has now become clear to you how the phrase *There is no god but Allah* comprises the three categories that each responsible person must acknowledge with respect to the Master, the Sublime and Majestic: what is necessary for Him, the Exalted, what is impossible, and what is possible.

وَأَمَّا قَوْلُنَا: مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم. فَيَدْخُلُ الإِيمَانُ الأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالمَلاَئِكَةِ وَالْكُتُبِ السَّمَاوِيَّةِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ، لأَنَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ جَاءَ بِتَصْدِيقِ جَمِيعِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ.

As for our saying Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, it includes belief in all of the other Prophets, as well as the angels and heavenly revealed Scriptures, and belief in the Last Day. That is because he ﷺ came to confirm belief in all of these things.

وَيُؤْخَذُ مِنْهُ: وُجُوبُ صِدْقِ الرُّسُلِ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ. وَاسْتِحَالَةُ الْكَذِبِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَإِلاَّ لَمْ يَكُونُوا رُسُلاً أُمَنَاءَ لِمَوْلاَنَا الْعَالِمِ بِالْخَفِيَّاتِ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ.

From this phrase it is also inferred that truthfulness is necessary for the Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them—and that lying is impossible for them, for otherwise they would not have been Messengers and trusted envoys of our Master, the Knower of all hidden things, Sublime and Majestic is He.

وَاسْتِحَالَةُ فِعْلِ الْمَنْهِيَّاتِ كُلِّهَا لأَنَّهُمْ أُرْسِلُوا لِيُعَلِّمُوا النَّاسَ بِأَقْوَالِهِمْ، وَأَفْعَالِهِمْ وَسُكُوتِهِمْ، فَيَلْزَمُ أَنْ لاَ يَكُونَ فِي جَمِيعِهَا مُخَالَفَةٌ لأَمْرِ مَوْلاَنَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ الَّذِي اخْتَارَهُمْ عَلَى جَمِيعِ خَلْقِهِ وَأَمِنَهُمْ عَلَى سِرِّ وَحْيِهِ.

[It is also inferred from this phrase] that it is impossible for [them] to commit any forbidden actions, because they were sent in order to instruct people through their words, actions, and silent [approvals], which necessitates that none of them contravened the commands of our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, who chose them over the rest of His creation and entrusted them with the secret of His revelation.

وَيُؤْخَذُ مِنْهُ: جَوَازُ ٱلأَعْرَاضِ ٱلْبَشَرِيَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ، إِذْ ذَاكَ لاَ يَقْدَحُ فِي رِسَالَتِهِمْ، وَعُلُوِّ مَنْزِلَتِهِمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ تَعَالَى بَلْ ذَاكَ مِمَّا يَزِيدُ فِيهَا.

From this phrase it is also inferred that it is permissible for [the Messengers عليهم السلام to experience] normal human conditions, for they do not detract from their lofty station with Allah, Exalted is He; rather, they increase them in it.

فَقَدْ بَانَ لَكَ تَضَمُّنُ كَلِمَتَي الشَّهَادَةِ مَعَ قِلَّةِ حُرُوفِهَا لِجَمِيعِ مَا يَجِبُ عَلَى الْمُكَلَّفِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ مِنْ عَقَائِدِ ٱلإِيمَانِ فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى وَفِي حَقِّ رُسُلِهِ عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلاَةُ وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Therefore, it has now become clear to you how the two phrases of the testimony of faith comprise—despite their limited number of letters—everything that a legally responsible person must acknowledge with regards to the tenets of faith as they pertain to Allah, Exalted is He, and His Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them.

وَلَعَلَّهَا لِاخْتِصَارِهَا مَعَ اشْتِمَالِهَا عَلَى مَا ذَكَرْنَاهُ جَعَلَهَا الشَّرْعُ تَرْجَمَةً عَلَى مَا فِي الْقَلْبِ مِنَ ٱلإِسْلاَمِ، وَلَمْ يَقْبَلْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ ٱلإِيمَانَ إِلاَّ بِهَا.

And perhaps it is on account of its brevity and the fact that it includes all that we have mentioned that the Sacred Law has made it an expression for what is of Islam in the heart, and has not accepted faith from anyone without it.

فَعَلَى الْعَاقِلِ أَنْ يُكْثِرَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهَا. مُسْتَحْضِرًا لِمَا احْتَوَتْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ عَقَائِدِ ٱلإِيمَانِ. حَتَّى تَمْتَزِجَ مَعَ مَعْنَاهَا بِلَحْمِهِ وَدَمِهِ. فَإِنَّهُ يَرَى لَهَا مِنَ ٱلأَسْرَارِ وَالْعَجَائِبِ إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ تَعَالَى مَالاَ يَدْخُلُ تَحْتَ حَصْرٍ.

Therefore, it behoves the intelligent person to be frequent in his mention of it, bringing to mind the tenets of faith included within it, until its meanings mix with his flesh and blood. For if he does so he will witness of its secrets and marvels, Allah willing, what cannot be delimited.

وَبِاللهِ التَّوْفِيقُ لاَ رَبَّ غَيْرُهُ، وَلاَ مَعْبُودَ سِوَاهُ.

With Allah is enabling grace. There is no Lord or object of worship besides Him.

نَسْأَلُهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى أَنْ يَجعَلَنَا وَأَحِبَّتَنَا عِنْدَ المَوْتِ نَاطِقِينَ بِكَلِمَةِ الشَّهَادَةِ عَالِمِينَ بِهَا.

We ask Him, the Glorified and Exalted, to make us and our loved ones among those who say—with true knowledge—the testimony of faith at the time of our death.

وَصَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، كُلَّمَا ذَكَرَهُ الذَّاكِرُونَ، وَغَفَلَ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِ الْغَافِلُونَ.

May Allah send blessings upon our liege lord Muhammad each time he is mentioned by those who engage in remembrance, and each time he is not mentioned by the heedless.

وَرَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللهِ أَجْمَعِينَ وَالتَّابِعِين لَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.

May Allah be pleased with all of the Companions of the Messenger as well as the Followers, and those who follow them with excellence until the Last Day.

وَسَلاَمٌ عَلَى المُرْسَلِينَ. وَالحَمْدُ للهِ رَبِّ العَالَمِينَ.

Peace be upon all of the Messengers, and all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds!

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ABRIDGMENT OF *IMAM AḤMAD B. ʿĪSĀ'S* COMMENTARY

ALL praise is due to Allah and may peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, our liege lord Muhammad, the best of all creation. You should know that this science is called the science of doctrine [*ʿaqāʾid*], the science of the fundamentals [*uṣūl al-dīn*], the science of Divine oneness [*tawḥīd*], and the science of speculative theology [*kalām*].[11]

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[11] There are individuals who quote and attribute statements to some of the Salaf who censured and rebuked those who engaged in this knowledge. All of these reports carry various possible interpretations. One possible interpretation is that the Salaf unrestrictedly forbade *kalām* theology—both what is correct and incorrect of it—and if that be the case their prohibition is rejected, for it is established by way of legal proofs that it is obligatory to utilize this science. This is not the intent behind the quotes attributed to them—may Allah have mercy upon them. The second possible interpretation is that their prohibition was directed against those who innovated and deviated from the path of *Ahl al-Sunna* and correct doctrine—and this is the correct understanding [of their words].

It is obligatory for one to shun false paths, and based upon that (in addition to the circumstances in which the Salaf made their statements) the scholars of the Umma understood their prohibition and warning. As for the claim that their prohibition was unrestricted and that it applies to all who engage in this science—be they from the people of truth or the people of falsehood—this is patently false, and no one gives any attention to this view except he who has a covering over his heart.

You should know that the crass literalists [*Ḥashawiyya*] and anthropomorphists who ascribe themselves to the pious Salaf—and the Salaf are free from them—have grossly exaggerated in their prohibition of engaging in this science. The only reason for their prohibition is because [they know that the] one who engages in this science, understands its fundamentals, and realizes its truth, will have unveiled to him the reality of their way: the way of the anthropomorphists who affirm a limit, direction, an indwelling of contingents within Allah's Entity, place, and movement. The one who understands this science will know that the way of the anthropomorphists is the falsest of ways.

This science seeks to investigate the doctrinal religious beliefs that are acquired from certain and sure evidence. What is meant here by doctrinal religious beliefs are the beliefs ascribed to the religion of our liege lord Muhammad ﷺ, such as [our belief that] the world is contingent, that its Creator is Allah, and that Allah is One.

The subject of this science is what is known of doctrinal religious beliefs by way of clear-cut and unequivocal [*qaṭ'ī*] evidence. The benefit of this science is that [through it], the doctrinal religious beliefs become ingrained and certain and are not subject to being shaken by the doubts of deniers. This allows one—by Allah's bounty—to gain salvation in the Hereafter from the punishment incurred for disbelief and incorrect doctrine. Through it also, one gains safety in the life of this world from distortions in thought and behaviour that result from a lack of proper comprehension regarding the reality of this world. The results of this science contain benefit in both this life and the Next.

You should know that what is sought from people with regards to doctrinal beliefs is the actual knowledge thereof. Knowledge is awareness of something with its accompanying proof; hence, incontrovertible belief that is congruent with the truth is not sufficient without proof, for he [who lacks proof] is not safe from sin and is [actually] disobedient, as shall soon be clarified.

Before we begin with our explanation of what is obligatory to believe, we shall present a beneficial introduction defining judgments [*ḥukm*] and what relate to them, because upon that many fundamentals of doctrine are built.

With this you should realize that those who rail against this noble science do so only to protect their own school lest its nakedness be exposed in front of the people. (F)

CHAPTER I

1.0 JUDGMENTS

In the [Arabic] language, judgment [*ḥukm*] means prevention [*man'*], and for this reason the ruler is called a *Ḥākim* because he prevents and keeps oppressors from the oppressed. In the technical nomenclature, a judgment is an affirmation or denial of one thing due to another thing. An example of affirmation is the judgment affirming existence and pre-eternality for Allah, the Exalted. An example of denial is the judgment denying contingency for Allah, the Exalted.

When viewed from their source, judgments are divided into three categories: legal judgments [*ḥukm shar'ī*] empirical judgments [*ḥukm 'ādī*], and rational judgments [*ḥukm 'aqlī*]. *Legal judgments* are found in the books of jurisprudence and works discussing its theoretical basis [*uṣūl*]. *Empirical judgments* are known through experimentation, testing, and repetition, such as the presence of combustion with fire. The Creator of the combustion is Allah, the Exalted, hence the fire possesses no independent and inherent effect in itself—and the same applies to all customary means. Allah has only made it so that He creates the action *within* ['*indahā*] it and not *by* it [*bihā*]. It is [rationally possible] for there to be a fire in which Allah did *not* create combustion, and the same applies to all customary means, for they do not possess independent effect.[12]

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[12] An empirical judgment is to affirm one thing for another or to deny one thing from another by way of repetition. It is of four categories:

1) A correlation between the presence of something and the presence of something else, such as the correlation between the presence of satiety and the presence of food.

2) A correlation between the presence of something and the absence of something else, such as the correlation between the presence of cold and the absence of warm coverings.

3) A correlation between the absence of something and the presence of something else, such as the correlation between the absence of burning and the presence of water.

4) A correlation between the absence of something and the absence of something else, such as the correlation between the absence of satiety and the absence of food. (B)

Rational judgments are understood by the intellect [*'aql*] without repetition or [needing recourse to] a coined definition. The intellect is a spiritual secret by which the self apprehends self-evident and non self-evident knowledge. The locus of the intellect is the heart and its light is in the mind. Its beginning is when the spirits are breathed into the foetuses and the first stage of its completion is at the age of discernment.

1.1 RATIONAL JUDGMENTS

Rational judgments are divided into three categories. The first category is necessary [*wujūb*]. Linguistically this word means firmness. In the technical nomenclature it means that which cannot be denied by the intellect.

The second category is the impossible [*istiḥāla*]. Linguistically this word means "to be held back or prevented." In the technical nomenclature it means that which cannot be affirmed by the intellect.

The third category is possible [or permissible—*jawāz*]. Linguistically this word means "to cross or pass." In the technical nomenclature it means that which can be either affirmed or denied by the intellect.

Based upon this, that which is necessary is something whose *non-existence* the intellect cannot conceive, such as the Divine Entity, the qualitative attributes, the predicative attributes, the self-signifying attribute, and the negating attributes. All of these are affirmed for Allah and it is incorrect to negate them from Him.

The necessary is divided into that which is pre-eternal and that which is contingent. The pre-eternal refers to that which is necessary for Allah, the Exalted, and the contingent refers to things like spatial confinement and mass, in that a thing must take up a certain amount of space or void. Another example of that which is necessary for contingent things is for accidents [*a'rāḍ*] to subsist within a substance, for that is a condition for the existence of a substance; if that substance doesn't exist, neither will the accident. As for the Necessary and Pre-eternal (Allah), He is not linked with anything else, for He does not undergo change.

Furthermore, with regards to something that is necessary and its degree of clarity vis-à-vis the intellect, there are two levels: 1) self-evident, which is something that does not require much effort to comprehend, such as comprehending that a substance takes up space and that one is half of two, and 2) speculative,[13] such as the affirmation of necessary qualities for Allah, and that one is half of a sixth of twelve.

The impossible is something whose *existence* the intellect cannot conceive. For this reason, the self-signifying attribute, the qualitative attributes, the predicative attributes, and the negating attributes are all affirmed and necessary for Allah even if in themselves they are non-existent.

The impossible has two levels: 1) self-evident, such as a substance being neither in a state of motion nor stillness at one given time, and 2) speculative, such as a partner with Allah and all other things determined as impossible for Allah.

The possible is something whose *existence and non-existence* the intellect can affirm, such as contingent things and their contingent attributes: qualitative, predicative, self-signifying attributes, and negating attributes.

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[13] The speculative is something that the intellect cannot comprehend until after contemplation and thought. An example of it would be the [Divine] punishment of an obedient person who never once in this life disobeyed Allah, the Exalted. Punishing such a person is rationally possible by Allah entering him into the Hellfire. Its non-occurrence is also rationally possible by Allah entering him into Paradise. Such a proposition, however, is not immediately considered possible until one contemplates and knows that Allah, the Exalted, does not take any benefit from [someone's] acts of obedience, and neither is He harmed by disobedience, and that it is impossible for Him, the Exalted, to commit oppression because oppression is wrongfully usurping the possession of another without permission; whereas our Master, the Glorified, is the King and Owner of all of creation, and He punishes whom He wills. If the intellect contemplates this it will realize that punishing an obedient person is rationally possible and both its occurrence and non-occurrence are rationally possible. (Ṭ)

All of these can be both affirmed or denied, so this formal definition includes all of them. This category also has two levels: 1) self-evident, such as a substance being qualified by either motion or stillness, and 2) non self-evident, such as the punishment of one who is obedient to Allah and never disobedient to Him, and reward allotted to the disobedient. Both of these are rationally possible; however, they are not self-evident. These [two things] are *rationally* possible, but in the Sacred Law we are informed that the obedient person shall have reward and that the disobedient shall be punished.

CHAPTER II

2.0 WHAT IS OBLIGATORY IN THE SACRED LAW UPON EVERY LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE PERSON

The legally responsible [*mukallaf*] person is the individual of sound intellect who has reached the age of puberty[14] and to whom the Islamic invitation [*da'wa*] has reached. The Sacred Law has emphatically sought from every legally responsible person that he knows Allah with knowledge [*ma'rifa*][15] of His attributes.[16]

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[14] He who dies before having reached the age of discernment is saved [in the Hereafter], even if he was among the children of the disbelievers. He shall not be punished for his disbelief or anything else. (*Ṣ*)

You should also know that the legally responsible person is one who has reached the age of puberty and possesses both sound intellectual faculties and senses—even if only hearing and sight—and is one whom the call [*da'wa*] has reached. This definition excludes the young child (even if he possessed discernment), the insane, the one who does not possess senses [i.e., one who is both blind and deaf], and the one unto whom the call of Islam did not reach. None of these people are legally responsible. Ordering a young child to pray and fast is not because he is legally responsible; rather, it is to encourage him so he may become accustomed to it and not leave it, if Allah wills. (*B*)

[15] The reality of knowledge is that it is a sure judgment congruent with [the truth] and accompanied with evidence. A sure judgment is decisive and without misgivings. He who bases his faith upon conjecture, doubt, or surmise has based it upon falsehood. Here, congruent means that it is in agreement [with the truth], for he whose sure judgment is not congruent is a disbeliever. What is meant here by evidence is the detailed evidence (which is the domain of scholars) and the general evidence, such as our sure judgment that Allah exists and that the evidence for His existence is this universe, for it must have a maker. As for a sure judgment that is congruent [with the truth], but not accompanied by either detailed or general evidence—such as the judgment of he who says that Allah exists, yet when asked for evidence, says: "I do not know; I heard my father saying it so I too say it"—such an individual does not possess knowledge, rather that is blind conformism [*taqlīd*]. He has adopted a view without knowing its evidence, and this is insufficient in matters pertaining to Divine oneness. (*Ṭ*)

[16] The general evidence is what is obligatory upon both the common folk and the elect. That is the evidence that one might be unable to articulate

By knowledge of His attributes, it does not mean knowledge of their realities, for that is impossible; rather, what is meant is that one must know the rulings that relate to them, as you shall see. Linguistically, the word for Sacred Law [*shara'*] means a path. In the technical nomenclature, it is the fundamentals and subsidiary matters, such as doctrine and jurisprudence that the Prophet ﷺ brought from Allah. The proof in the Book [the Qur'an] for this obligation is the words of the Exalted: ﴾*So know that there is no god but Allah.*﴿ [Muhammad: 19]. Proof from the Sunna is [in the Hadith]: "I was commanded to fight the people until they testify that there is no god but Allah..."[17]

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and/or whose intricacies one cannot solve. As for the detailed evidence, it is the evidence that one is able to articulate and whose intricacies one *can* solve. The one who possesses general evidence is he who can conceptualize the doctrinal beliefs in his mind, even if he is unable to verbally express them in such a way that if asked, he could provide a sure answer. The proof for both groups is the existence of the universe, either without going into details regarding how inferences are made, or going into detail but being unable to respond to doubts. If such a person is able to engage in a detailed response to doubts then he is from the people of detailed evidence. (Ṣ)

[17] Al-Bukhārī reported in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* collection from Abū Hurayra ؓ: "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed and Abū Bakr was [in power] and groups of the Arabs fell into disbelief, 'Umar ؓ said: 'How can you fight the people when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "I have been commanded to fight the people until they say that there is no god but Allah. Whoever says it has made his blood and wealth inviolable to me—save by the rights—and his account is with Allah."' Abū Bakr replied: 'I swear by Allah, I shall most certainly fight the one who makes a distinction between prayer and Zakat, for Zakat is the right of the wealth. I swear by Allah, if they even withhold a camel-cord that they would give to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ I shall fight them for it.' 'Umar said: 'By Allah, it is nothing more than Allah having expanded Abū Bakr's breast, so I know it is the truth.'"

So with this narration we see that the end stage of disbelief is right before the utterance of the two testimonies of faith, and after that there is the stage of faith [*īmān*]. This Hadith is also found in al-Tirmidhī and al-Nasā'ī's *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*. There is another narration in the *Sunan* of al-Nasā'ī, from al-Zuhrī from Anas b. Mālik who said: "When the Messenger ﷺ passed and the Arabs became apostates, 'Umar said: 'O Abū Bakr! How can you fight the Arabs?' Abū Bakr replied: 'The Prophet said:

2.1 KNOWLEDGE AND CONFORMISM

The reality of knowledge [*ma'rifa*] is that it is a sure judgment congruent with the truth and based upon evidence. The testimony [of faith] is built upon knowledge and not conjecture—and this is in accordance with its lexical import—hence doubt, conjecture, and surmise are insufficient in doctrine. Nay, such things are disbelief.

This leads us to a well known issue called *the issue of the conformist* [*mas'ala al-muqallid*]: what is the ruling on such a person in the Sacred Law? The conformist is someone who believes —without proof—in that which is necessary, possible, and impossible for Allah, the Exalted. In other words, he has made a sure judgment that is congruent with the truth, but it was without evidence. This situation occurs when one learns the obligatory doctrine without proof. The scholars differ regarding such a person and there are many views. The majority of scholars maintained that such a person, although a believer, is disobedient if he was able to investigate but refrained from doing so. This means that if such a person had the ability to know the evidence for doctrinal beliefs, yet did not make any efforts, he is disobedient, although his faith is sound. It has also been said that he is a believer who is not disobedient, and it has also been said that he is a disbeliever—and these latter two opinions are weak.[18]

"I have been commanded to fight the people until they testify that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah, and [until] they establish the prayer and pay the Zakat." I swear by Allah, if they withhold from me even a camel-cord that they used to give the Messenger of Allah ﷺ I shall fight them for it.' 'Umar said: 'After I saw that Abū Bakr's opinion had expanded his breast, I knew that it was the truth."' In his *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, al-Ṭabarānī narrated this from Mu'ādh b. Jabal with the wording "until they testify..." In the *Sunan* of al-Bayhaqī this Hadith is reported with the wording: "until they say..." This Hadith is recorded in the books of the Sunna. (*F*)

[18] The scholars differ regarding the faith of the person who whose sound beliefs are based on conformism. The relied upon position is that if such a person is capable of investigation leading to knowledge, then he is only a disobedient believer. Such a person is disobedient because he did not know the evidence, but his faith will save him from eternal damnation in the Fire. If, on the other hand, a person is incapable of

As for what the legally responsible person must know,[19] we shall mention it here in summary and mention its details soon after. The [legally responsible person] must know what[20] is affirmed for Allah, the Sublime and Majestic. That is of two categories: the general and the detailed. The general is for one to know and believe that every attribute of perfection is necessary for Allah,

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investigation, then he is a believer who is not disobedient. It has also been said that the conformist is not disobedient at all, and it has been said that such a person is a disbeliever.

The investigation that takes ones from conformism to knowledge is the general investigation of the laity—as the Bedouin Arab responded when al-Aṣmaʿī asked him: "How do you know your Lord?" The Bedouin said: "Camel droppings indicate a camel and footprints indicate a traveller, so the heavens that possess constellations, the earth that possesses mountain passes, and the oceans that possess waves—do they not prove the existence of One who is Subtle and Well-Aware?" It is not conditional that there be a detailed investigation like that of the theologians, in which they arrange and deduce evidence and respond to misconceptions.

You should know also that investigation is a means of knowing Allah, His Messengers عليهم السلام, and His attributes. Knowing is a means to the legal faith, which is conviction and belief in all that our Prophet ﷺ brought from what is known from the religion by necessity. What is meant by conviction here is inner compliance, which is the soul's acceptance and conformity, saying: "I believe and am pleased with this," which is expressed as "the soul speaking to itself"—and Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, is the One who grants success, and there is no Lord besides He. (*M*)

[19] There is a difference of opinion over the meaning of knowledge [*maʿrifa*]. It has been said that it is a sure judgment congruent with the truth and based upon evidence, and it has been said that it can also be without evidence. (*Ṣ*)

[20] The word "what" [*mā*] here is general, as is well known. Therefore it is obligatory upon one who is legally responsible to know all that is necessary, impossible, and possible [for Allah and His Messengers عليهم السلام]. The manner in which this is known is either detailed (in that which is known with detail) or is it general (in that which is known in general). (*F*)

the Exalted. The detailed is for one to know and believe in the twenty necessary attributes.[21]

It is also a duty upon one to know what is impossible for Allah, the Exalted, both in general and in detail. That which is general is for one to believe that every deficiency is impossible for Allah. That which is detailed is for one to believe that the opposites of the aforementioned twenty attributes [are impossible for Allah]. It is also obligatory upon one to know and believe that which is permissible for Allah, both in general and in detail. That which is in general is for one to believe that it is possible for Allah to either do or leave every possible act. That which is detailed is for one to believe in the divinely revealed doctrines such as the matters pertaining to the Hereafter, for they are rationally possible and [faith in them is] obligatory in the Sacred Law.

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[21] What is mentioned here, that the detailed knowledge of what is necessary and impossible [for Allah] is knowledge of the twenty attributes [that are obligatory and the twenty that are impossible], is based upon the affirmation of *aḥwāl* (modes), which is based upon the method of those who maintain that there are four categories: existents that can be seen, non-existents that are not affirmed, *aḥwāl* that are in an intermediary position between existents and non-existents, and finally, relative matters that are affirmed but not at the level of *aḥwāl*.

This division is based upon the premise that *aḥwāl* are a separate category, and this was the view of Imam al-Sanūsī and others. Some of the verifying scholars have stated that the truth of the matter is that there are no *aḥwāl*, and that they are impossible. Imam al-Sanūsī, however, did say in some of his books: "In general, the difference of opinion in this issue is well known and both views have their evidence, so contemplate this well."

According to the view that negates *aḥwāl*—which is the most correct position according to the majority of scholars—there are only three categories: that which is existent, that which is non-existent, and relative matters. So something either exists or doesn't exist; there is no intermediate state for an entity in which it is neither qualified by existence or non-existence. Similarly, there is no intermediate position for the inherent self-signifying attributes. (*B*) and (*F*)

In the Sacred Law, it is also obligatory upon one to know the same aforementioned categories (the necessary, impossible, and possible) as they apply to the Prophets عليهم السلام, because every Messenger is a Prophet, and it is obligatory for them to possess truthfulness, infallibility, and intelligence. For the Messengers عليهم السلام [in addition to those things] it is obligatory that they convey the message.

Lying, cheating, concealing, heedlessness, and stupidity are impossible for them عليهم السلام. It is possible that they عليهم السلام are subjected to normal human states that do not detract from their high rank.

CHAPTER III

3.0 SOME OF WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR ALLAH

We say *some* of what is necessary, because His perfections are limitless. Allah has not obliged us to know all of His perfections in detail because that would amount to being commanded with what is beyond [human] capacity. The Exalted said: ﴾*Allah does not burden a soul more than it can bear.*﴿ [al-Baqara: 286]. Allah, out of His bounty upon us, did not oblige that.

Twenty attributes are necessary for Him. The word "attribute" is used to denote an existing meaning that subsists with the one who is described and which is not the entity—and this is the intent here.[22] The attributes are divided into four categories:[23] self-signifying attributes [*nafsiyya*], negating attributes [*salbiyya*], qualitative attributes [*maʿānī*], and predicative attributes [*maʿnawiyya*]. We shall explain these categories now. There exists some dispute regarding these categories and we shall clarify that in its appropriate place.

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[22] That which is *not* the Entity is either ascriptive [*iḍāfī*], negating [*salbī*], or subsistent [*wujūdī*]. (*F*)

[23] According to the position that negates *aḥwāl*, the Divine attributes are categorized as follows: attributes are either the Entity itself, and these are the self-signifying attributes, or they are other than the Entity, and these are the negating attributes because they point to something that is non-existent, or they are attributes of action because of their contingency [*ḥudūth*]. It could be that the attributes are not the Entity, nor are they *other* than the Entity, and these are called the qualitative attributes. If the attributes are not the Entity or other than the Entity and they are relative (from a particular frame of reference), they are called predicative attributes or comprehensive attributes. They are: Might, Honour, Beauty, Being free of need, and so on. (*Ṣ*) These are great words full of benefit. (*F*)

3.1 THE SELF-SIGNIFYING ATTRIBUTE

It is called the self-signifying attribute because its description indicates the being itself and not a quality that is superadded to the being. This is only one attribute: that of existence.[24]

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[24] There is a difference of opinion over existence. Is it the same thing as the existent or is it [an additional quality]? Imam al-Ashʿarī ؓ took the former position based upon the negation of *aḥwāl* (which is the relied upon view, for there is no intermediate position between existence and non-existence according to Imam al-Ashʿarī); therefore this description is relative to one's particular frame of reference and it has no affirmation [outside of that frame of reference]. An example illustrating this would be a garment within a box: if someone took out the garment, it would be described with visibility—and this is only from that particular frame of reference, for its [visibility] has no outside existence—in that he can envision seeing it within himself from another frame of reference. Based upon this, calling being an attribute—according to the view of some of the investigating scholars—does not mean that it is an attribute that self-subsists within something; rather it is something by which one can judge that thing, whether or not it is its exact reality [ʿ*ayn ḥaqīqatihi*], self-subsisting within it, or outside of it. This definition is inclusive of existence, negating attributes, qualitative attributes, and predicative attributes, even according to the view that negates *aḥwāl*. (Ṣ)

The one who considered *being* relative based on a particular frame of reference [in that it is a quality superadded to the essence] was Imam al-Rāzī (as well as some others). His inclusion of being as an attribute according to the way of Imam al-Ashʿarī is based upon the general meaning of the word "attribute," for it is said that "Allah exists," thus, being is ascribed to Allah, the Exalted. Al-Rāzī's inclusion of being as an attribute according to the way of Imam al-Ashʿarī is based upon the general meaning of the word "attribute," which is inclusive merely from the lexical standpoint, and this is the intent here. Imam al-Rāzī said in some of his other works that being is relative, meaning that it is relative to a particular frame of reference, and not a qualitative attribute. According to him, this is based upon the fact that, in the human mind, being is something additional to the quiddity [*māhiya*] of a thing, thus according to him, it is from the relative things that, in the mind, are different from the actualities of the entity. So the frame of reference here is not the same as the frame of reference attributed to Imam al-Ashʿarī.

Existence is a necessary quality of the being as long as the being is not effectuated by a proceeding cause [*mu'allala bi-'illa*]. Based upon this, existence is an attribute of the self that carries a different connotation than either qualitative or negating attributes. The qualitative attributes are existing attributes and the negating attributes are non-existent, whereas the attributes of self are from the *aḥwāl* (modes); it is an established quality that is not described with existence or non-existence. In addition, it is a *ḥāl* (mode) for the Entity and not the attributes, although it is permissible for you to say: "The omnipotence of Allah exists." Similarly, [the same can be said with regards to His] will, knowledge and other qualitative attributes. The attribute of existence[25] is also necessary for the Entity as long as the Entity *is*,

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This is the meaning of *ishtirāk lafẓī* (homonymity) with reference to being. Some ignoramuses mistakenly assumed (or mentioned in their fallacious reasoning) that because Allah is qualified with being implies an affirmation of actual non-being for the creation. By this statement, those ignoramuses wanted to aid their claim to the doctrine of "oneness of being" [*waḥda al-wujūd*] that is based upon the premise that creation—which includes this entire universe that we see—is nothing more than a relative existence that self-subsists within the being of Allah, the Exalted. Some have used fallacious reasoning claiming that if we affirm existence for the creation, we implicitly allow for Allah to have a partner in an attribute. The one who says this did not seem to be aware of the fact that Imam al-Ash'arī negated this implication by stating that there is homonymity [*ishtirāk lafẓī*] in the word "existence." The one who takes this view is forced by implication [to believe] that there is nothing in the kingdom of Allah that exists, thus going against the clear-cut belief that Allah is a Creator. (*F*)

Imam al-Bājūrī said: "The fact of the matter is, as some have stated: It is not obligatory upon the legally responsible person to believe any of this. Nay, it is sufficient for him to believe that Allah exists—even if he does not believe that the existent and existence are the same or not—because this is a matter over which the theologians have had long and drawn out differences—so take note of this." (*B*)

[25] The existence of Allah is not like the existence of contingent beings, for Allah's existence independent; it is not through another actor or causal effect, whereas the existence of contingent beings is through Allah and His act, for He, the Exalted, was alone and there was nothing besides Him, as is recorded in the noble Hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. Then, Allah, the Glorified and Majestic, brought the

contingent beings into existence—so their existence is not intrinsic, rather it is extrinsic and incidental. And because His existence is intrinsic, Allah cannot be qualified with previous non-existence or future non-existence. Beginninglessness [*azal*] is the constant duration of existence in the past and "eternity" [*abad*] is the constant duration of existence in the future—and this is also expressed as "that which shall never cease." (*M*)

As for things other than Allah, they are existent beings that possess an existence different from Allah's existence; however, their existence is still real and affirmed because of the linkage of Allah's act to them. This action of His is the relation of His omnipotence, and for this reason, some call the creation "the act of Allah." This does not mean that it is a mere linkage or a non-existent or ascription engendered by emanation [*ishrāqiyya*]—it means that these created beings are linked to the act of Allah. If this linkage to Allah's omnipotence [meaning His act] is severed from them, the created beings will cease to exist. So their continued existence is conditioned upon the continuance of Allah's omnipotence being linked with them. The act of Allah does not subsist within His Entity, for if so that would necessarily imply that He is qualified by contingent beings within His Entity, and would entail other corrupt beliefs. For this reason the erudite scholar al-Amīr said in his gloss upon 'Abd al-Salām's commentary on the *Jawhara*: "As for other than Him—meaning other than Allah—it is His action. Some of the would-be Sufis and philosophers opined that there is an Absolute Existence [*al-wujūd al-muṭlaq*], and that nothing other than Him is to be described with being. According to them, if one said that man exists, it means that he is linked with *being*, which is Allah, the Exalted. But this is disbelief, although it is not union and indwelling."

This noble statement from al-Amīr clarifies the inherent corruption found in the doctrine of oneness of being, and shows how it is in opposition to the way of *Ahl al-Sunna*. He goes on to say that the one who holds this belief is *not* forced by implication to admit to belief in union or indwelling. You will see some who believe in the oneness of being negating indwelling and union, and this is just to fool the people, for many unwittingly suppose that the doctrine of oneness of being forces its adherent to admit to indwelling and union, so [the one who believes in oneness of being] suffices himself with negating indwelling and union in order to give others the impression that he does not oppose the way of *Ahl al-Sunna*. And the one who is fooled by this person is unaware of what we have mentioned. Instead, the doctrine of oneness of being is based upon negation of multiplicity in existence. As for the belief in and it—meaning the attribute—is not effectuated by anything, which is different from predicative states, such Him being Willing and being All-Powerful, etc., for these attributes are conferred meanings. This is to say that there is interrelatedness between the attributes and what they predicate.

The Proof in the Book for Allah's existence is in His statement: ﴾*Allah is the Creator of everything.*﴿ [al-Zumar: 62]. And from the Sunna, there is the Prophet's statement ﷺ: "Indeed, Allah is the Creator of every maker and his craft."[26] The Umma unanimously agrees that Allah, the Exalted, exists. As for the rational evidence, it shall soon be presented.

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union and indwelling, it is based upon affirmation of multiplicity in existence—otherwise there would be no union or indwelling with anything. Ponder this well. (*F*)

[26] This Hadith was narrated by al-Ḥākim in his *Mustadrak* with many different chains, all going to Ḥudhayfa who reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Indeed, Allah is the Creator of every maker and what he makes." Al-Ḥākim said: "This Hadith is rigorously authentic based upon the conditions of Muslim, yet they [al-Bukhārī and Muslim] did not report it." It was also narrated by al-Bukhārī in *Khalq Af'āl al-'Ibād* from Ḥudhayfa ؓ who reported: "The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Indeed, Allah creates every maker and what he makes.' After hearing this, some of them read the verse: ﴾*Allah created you and what you do*﴿—so He mentioned that the things made [*ṣanā'āt*] and their makers are all created.

In his *Khalq Af'āl al-'Ibād*, al-Bukhārī narrated this Hadith with the wording: "Indeed, Allah is the Creator of every maker and what he makes. Indeed, Allah created the maker of the nose-ring [of a camel] and his craft." In Imam Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* collection, he narrated from Abū Hurayra who reported: "The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Let none of you say: 'O Allah! Forgive me if You wish,' or 'O Allah! Have mercy upon me if You wish.' One should be decisive in his supplication, for Allah is the Maker of what He wills and no one can compel Him.'" All of these Hadith prove that Allah is called the Maker [*Ṣāni'*] and prove that this Name can be used for Him. There are other benefits to be found in these narrations for the one who contemplates them. (*F*)

3.2 THE NEGATING ATTRIBUTES

They are called negating attributes[27] because they negate what does not befit Allah, the Exalted. These attributes are: pre-eternality [*qidam*], endlessness [*baqā'*], absolute dissimilarity from all contingent beings [*mukhālafa lil-ḥawādith*], self-subsistence [*qiyāmuhu bi-nafsihi*], and oneness [*waḥdāniyya*].

3.2.1 PRE-ETERNALITY [*QIDAM*][28]

Pre-eternality[29] is a negation of non-existence prior to existence. This means that Allah's existence is not preceded by non-existence. *Qidam*[30] is of three categories: *qidam* of the entity [*qidam dhāt*], temporal *qidam* [*qidam zamānī*], and relative *qidam* [*qidam iḍāfī*]. *Qidam* of the entity is the pre-eternality of Allah and His attributes. An example of temporal *qidam* is like yesterday proceeding today. An example of relative *qidam* is fatherhood proceeding childhood [i.e., the father is before the son]. Both temporal *qidam* and relative *qidam* are impossible for Allah, the Exalted, for if you said that Allah is temporally *qadīm* with a starting point in time [*zamān*], you are forced to admit that He is qualified with contingent events, and that time is eternal, and that infinite regress in the past is permissible—and all of this is false.

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[27] The negative attributes are called the most important of fundamentals, for negating their opposites entail a declaration of Allah's Divine transcendence above imperfections. (*S*)

[28] The correct view is that it is allowed to use the word "pre-eternal" [*qadīm*] for the Most Exalted, for it is established by way of consensus and several narrations that use it in place of [the Name] the First [*al-Awwal*]. (*B*)

I say: The correct view is that it is completely allowed. As for the consensus, it is [the consensus] from *Ahl al-Sunna* and all other well known sects, as opposed to the anthropomorphist followers of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, who forbid it. As we clarified above, the Name *al-Qadīm* means the same as the Name "the First." In some sound and rigorously authentic narrations the Prophet ﷺ said: "I seek refuge with Allah the All-Mighty, with His Noble Countenance, and with His pre-eternal authority [*sulṭānihi al-qadīm*] from the accursed Satan." The Prophet ﷺ described the authority as pre-eternal, so it is permissible to ascribe that to Allah, the Exalted. As we mentioned, this Hadith is either sound or rigorously authentic: it was narrated by Abū Dāwūd from ʿAbdullāh b. ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ from the Prophet ﷺ. The Hadith alluded to by al-Bājūrī was reported by Ibn Mājah from Abū Hurayra, and it is weak. What we have mentioned here is a stronger argument in favour of its permissibility. This issue—the question of whether a certain Name can be used for Him—is speculative [*ẓannī*] in nature, and we say that speculative evidence is enough for it because it falls within the realm of actions and not the tenets of faith—as opposed to the actual meaning of the word "pre-eternal," as is clear to the intelligent. (*F*)

[29] Sa'd [al-Taftazānī] said: "Beginninglessness [*azal*] is more general than pre-eternality [*qidam*] because the Pre-eternal [*al-Qadīm*] is He who is self-sufficient without a first beginning. The Beginningless is the One who is not preceded by anything else—be it non-existence or existence —and is self-sufficient within Himself or His Lofty Entity; hence,

The proof with in the Book [the Qur'an] that Allah is described with pre-eternality His statement: ❴*He is the First.*❵ [al-Ḥadīd: 3]. And from the Sunna: "O Allah! You are the First; there is nothing before You..."[31] The Umma is in unanimous agreement that Allah

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the attributes of Allah are beginningless, and it is not to be said that they are pre-eternal. As for the Entity of Allah, it is beginninglessly pre-eternal. (Ṣ)

[Al-Zabīdī,] the commentator on [al-Ghazālī's] *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, said: "'Abdullāh b. Sa'īd and Abū al-'Abbās al-Qalānisī—two of the early Ash'arīs—said that "pre-eternal" is a meaning that is self-subsisting with Him, and that the Deity, Glorified is He, is Pre-eternal in that He is qualified with pre-eternality within His Entity. They say that His attributes exist and are established within His Entity and that they are beginningless [*azalī*], and that it shouldn't be said that they are pre-eternal or temporal. The *Mu'tazila*, on the other hand, claimed that Allah shouldn't be described as beginningless, and it shouldn't be said that He has always been described as All-Knowing within Himself. This shall be researched and refuted if Allah wills." (Al-Zabīdī)

[30] The primary lexical meaning of the word *qidam* in the Arabic language is ancientness and antiquity. In a theological context, *qidam* is most correctly translated as pre-eternal. The distinction between the translation of *qidam* as it applies to Allah, the Exalted, and other things qualified with *qidam* are made clear here as the author mentions the three categories of *qidam*.—Tr

[31] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-Mufrad* from Abū Hurayra who said: "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would retire to his bed, he would say: 'O Allah! The Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of everything. The One who splits the seeds and the grains. The

is described with pre-eternality[32]—neither His Entity nor His attributes are proceeded by non-existence. As for the rational proof for this, it shall soon be presented.

One who revealed the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an. I seek refuge with You from every possessor of evil; You seize them by their forelocks. You are the First; there is nothing before You. You are the Last; there is nothing after You. You are the Manifest; there is nothing above You. You are the Hidden; there is nothing underneath You. Fulfil for me my debts and enrich me from abject poverty.'" This was also narrated by al-Bukhārī in *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* and it is found in the *Sunans* of al-Tirmidhī and al-Bayhaqī [with a similar wording]. (*F*)

[32] This consensus is based upon the narrations that describe Allah with the term "pre-eternal." In addition, the narration of Abū Dāwūd from Shurayḥ who said: "I met 'Uqba b. Muslim and said to him: 'It has reached me that you narrated from 'Abdullāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ from the Prophet ﷺ that when he would enter the Mosque he would say: "I seek refuge with Allah the All-Mighty, with His Noble Countenance, and with His pre-eternal authority [*sulṭānihi al-qadīm*] from the accursed Satan." Did you narrate that?' He replied: 'Yes. He said that if one says that, Satan says: "This person has been safeguarded from me for the remainder of the day."'"

This is a strong chain that is, at minimum, a sound Hadith suitable for being used as evidence. This Hadith explicitly describes Allah's authority with the word "pre-eternal." If you are aware of this fact, then do not be deceived by the objectionable comments of Ibn Bāz upon the words of Imam al-Ṭaḥāwī where he [Ibn Bāz] said: "This expression is not among Allah's Beautiful Names, as mentioned by the commentator and others. This was only mentioned by many scholars of *kalām* theology in order to establish His existence before anything else. The Names of Allah are divinely revealed and it is not permissible to affirm any of them except with a textual proof from the Mighty Book or the authentic Sunna."

In these false words of his, Ibn Bāz rebuked Imam al-Ṭaḥāwī. When he mentioned the commentator, he intended Ibn Abī al-'Izz al-Ḥanafī who went against the doctrine of the Ḥanafīs and was a loyal follower of Ibn Taymiyya. In many places his commentary inclines to the way of the anthropomorphists. It has already been made clear that this word ["pre-eternal"] is found in the authentic Sunna and that the Umma is in unanimous agreement regarding the permissibility of its use as a description of Allah, the Exalted. This consensus was mentioned by al-Zabīdī in his commentary on *Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. This consensus is not harmed in the least by the opposition of the crass anthropomorphists, for they are not relied upon in such matters. One should bear in mind

3.2.2 ENDLESSNESS [*BAQĀ'*]

Endlessness is a negation of non-existence occurring after the existence of the Entity and attributes. He is the First with no beginning and He is the Last with no end.[33]

The proof in the Book for endlessness is the statement of the Exalted: ❮*And the Face of your Lord shall ever remain.*❯ [al-Raḥmān: 27]. This means His Entity, for the word Face in this verse means countenance. In the Sunna: "O Allah! You are the Last; there is nothing after You..."

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that this expression ["pre-eternal"] is found in other Hadith as well, such as the narration of Ibn Mājah and al-Ḥākim from Abū Hurayra in which [the ninety-nine Names] are enumerated. We explained this in detail in our commentary on the creed of al-Ṭaḥāwī and critiqued and refuted Ibn Bāz's claims, demolishing its pillars. Refer to it.

One should also bear in mind that according to sound investigation, it is allowed to use a description for Allah, the Exalted, even if not found in a primary source text; why then did Ibn Bāz not consider pre-eternal to be a description instead of a Name? Had he considered it as such, he would not have felt the need to object to the scholars; however, this is their state of affairs and they always go to great pains in levelling accusations against others. (*F*)

[33] Endlessness is for a being to be without end. When it is said that Allah is Endless, it means there is no end to His existence—in other words, His existence has no termination or expiration, for He, the Glorified, exists and there is no end to His existence. The Exalted said: ❮*He is the First and the Last.*❯ This means that Allah, the Glorified, is the First before everything, without a beginning, and He is the Last after everything, without an end. The Name "the First" in this verse proves pre-eternality [*qidam*], and the Name "the Last" proves endlessness; both of these necessitate that He is the One who must necessarily exist [*wujūb wujūdihi*], Exalted is He. What we have stated here applies to the endlessness of Allah's Entity and attributes. As for its meaning when applied to a contingent being, it means a continued existence with the possibility of being met with non-existence. (*M*)

The permanence [*baqā'*] of a contingent being is temporal, whereas the endlessness of the pre-eternal is not based in time. This means that the permanence of a contingent being is through continuation and elapsing through time, contrary to the endlessness of Allah, the Exalted, for He is not subject to continually emerging states occurring one after another successively. Nay, change is not possible for Him in the first place. (*F*)

The Umma is in unanimous agreement that Allah is described with endlessness. As for the rational proof, it shall be presented soon.

3.2.3 Absolute Dissimilarity from all Contingent Beings [*Mukhālafa lil-Ḥawādith*]

Absolute dissimilarity from all contingent beings is a negation of any likeness to His Entity, attributes, and actions.[34] His Entity is not from the genus of light, darkness, accidents, or substances. Rather: "*Whatever appears to your mind, then know that Allah is different from that.*" He does not possess a direction or place, nor is He affected by the passage of time. His attributes are pre-eternal and endless, and because He is the Creator, His attributes are absolutely dissimilar to those of the creation. The servants have no independent efficacy whatsoever in their actions; rather, their [actions] subsist within them by their acquisition thereof [*kasb*].

The proof in the Book for Allah's absolute dissimilarity from contingent beings is the words of the Exalted: ❴*There is nothing like unto Him and He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.*❵ [al-Shūrā: 11]. The proof from the Sunna is in the narration of Ibn Kaʿb: "The pagans said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: 'Tell us your Lord's lineage,' so Allah revealed: ❴*Say*: "*He is Allah, the One. Allah, the Self-Sufficient* [*al-Ṣamad*]..."❵ [al-Ikhlāṣ]. The Self-Sufficient [al-Ṣamad] is the One who neither begets, nor is begotten; for there is nothing that is born save that it shall also die, and there is nothing that shall die save [something] will inherit from it afterwards, but Allah, the Sublime and Majestic, neither dies nor leaves inheritance.

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[34] So there is no similarity between Allah and His creation in any way whatsoever. Allah, the Exalted said: ❴*There is nothing like unto Him.*❵ He also said: ❴*And there is nothing similar to Him*❵ meaning there is nothing like Him. If, in the speech of Allah or His Messenger ﷺ you find that which alludes to resemblance, do not believe in its outward indication, for the scholars have unanimously concurred that such texts are to be interpreted [*taʾwīl*], which means that their outward meanings are not used. (*M*)

﴾*And there is none like Him.*﴿ He has nothing similar or equal to Him and nothing is like Him.[35]

The Umma has unanimously agreed that Allah, the Exalted, is absolutely dissimilar from contingent beings.[36] As for the rational proof, it shall soon be mentioned.

3.2.4 SELF-SUBSISTENCE [*QIYĀM BIL-NAFS*]

Self-subsistence is negation of having need for a locus [*maḥall*] or a determiner [*mukhaṣṣiṣ*]. He, the Glorified, is not in need of a locus in which to subsist—as an attribute subsists within that which is described [*al-ṣifa fī al-mawṣūf*] as was claimed by the Christians and the *Bāṭiniyya*. There is unanimous consensus that whoever believes that Allah is in something is a disbeliever.

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[35] This was narrated by al-Tirmidhī in his *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ* from Ubay b. Kaʿb. It was also narrated by al-Ḥākim in his *Mustadrak* from Ubay as well (*F*).

In addition to this, it is obligatory to negate the belief in "oneness of being." This view posits that there is no being other than Allah and that all we see and witness are nothing more than relative things of non-being or emanations that are established in Allah's Entity. This view states that there is no real existence for created beings and that they are established within the existence of Allah as relative frames of reference or manifestations [*maẓāhir*] or images. Some of them even went so far as to say that they are limits [*ḥudūd*] or links [*quyūd*]. All of this is in opposition to the way of *Ahl al-Sunna*. On the contrary, it is obligatory to affirm the existence of the universe after it was previously non-existent, that its existence is other than Allah's existence, and that the continuation of the universe's existence is conditioned upon Allah's continual action and creation of it. If Allah's continual creation of the universe ceased, the universe itself would cease. (*F*)

[36] Ibn Taymiyya denied this consensus and claimed that the Umma did not unanimously agree that Allah is dissimilar to the creation from all angles. He claimed that there is no condemnation of resemblance [between Allah and the creation] found within the Sacred Law, and that no one has ever been condemned for resemblance [*tashbīh*]. He claimed that the reports from the Salaf negating resemblance only mean that they negated that Allah was composed of flesh and bone! His belief is extremely horrendous and fits well with his doctrine of anthropomorphism and logical fallacies. We have explained this in great detail in our book *The Small Disclosure Regarding the Doctrine of Ibn Taymiyya.* (*F*)

Similarly, believing in indwelling and union—which is when two things become one—is disbelief as well. [Shihāb al-Dīn al-Maqqarī,] the author of *Iḍā’a al-Dujunna fī ‘Aqīda Ahl al-Sunna*, said:

Do not lend your ear to the view of the Christians
  Or the one who claims indwelling [ḥulūl]
That is like the belief in union [ittḥād]
  It is the view of the people of deviance and atheism

He is not in need of a determiner.[37] Had He been in need of that He would be contingent. The proof in the Book that Allah, the Exalted, is free of needing a locus or a determiner is the words of the Exalted: ﴾*O mankind! You are all poor unto Allah and Allah is free of all needs and worthy of all praise.*﴿ [al-Fāṭir: 15]. The proof from the Sunna is the Prophet's statement ﷺ: "O Allah! There is no god but You, the One free of all need..."[38] The Umma is in unanimous agreement that Allah is Self-subsistent, meaning free of all needs [*al-Ghanī*]. As for the rational proof, it shall soon be presented.

NOTICE
You should know that existents are four categories:

1. That which exists and is not in need of a locus or a determiner: Allah
2. That which exists and is established within a locus, yet is free of needing a determiner: in this category are the

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[37] What is meant here by determiner is a doer and something that brings [something else] into existence; something that characterizes Him [Allah] with existence as opposed to non-existence. This is impossible for the Deity [Allah] because the one who is in need of a determiner accepts the possibility of being non-existent, which is not possible for Allah, the Exalted, in either His Entity or any of His attributes. (*M*)

[38] This wording was narrated in a Hadith found in the *Mustadrak* of al-Ḥākim from ‘Ā’isha ؓ. In a similar narration found in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd he ﷺ stated: "O Allah! You are Allah. There is no god but You. You are the One free of all needs [*al-Ghanī*] and we are the poor." This wording was also narrated by al-Bayhaqī in *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* collection. (*F*)

attributes of Allah because by locus here [it refers to] the Entity

3. That which exists and is in need of both a locus and a determiner: such as an accident, because it is in need of subsisting within a body
4. That which exists and is free of needing a locus, yet is in need of a determiner: such as a substance, because it is not in need of a locus in which to self-subsist [for it is a body], whereas it needs a doer [*fā'il*], and the One who brings it into existence is Allah

You should also know that it should *not* be said that the attributes of Allah are in need of the Entity; rather, it should be said that they self-subsist within the Entity, for being in need only applies to the "other" and it is not said that the attributes are other than the Entity, just as it is not said that they are the Entity itself.

NOTICE

It is permissible to describe Allah, the Exalted, with the word "self" [*nafs*]; in other words, it is permissible to apply this expression for Him, the Exalted. Allah said [mentioning the words of Prophet 'Īsā ﷺ]: ﴾*You know what is in myself and I do not know what is in Yourself. Indeed, You are the Absolute Knower of the unseen.*﴿ [al-Mā'ida: 116]. And the Exalted said: ﴾*And Allah warns you from Himself.*﴿ [Āl-'Imrān: 28].

3.2.5 ONENESS [*WAḤDĀNIYYA*][39]

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[39] The definition of *tawḥīd* in the Sacred Law is to single out for worship the One who is worshipped, while believing in the Divine oneness of His Entity, attributes, and actions. (Ṣ)

Oneness [*waḥdāniyya*] is different from *tawḥīd*. *Tawḥīd* is belief in the Divine oneness—nay it means to possess it in both faith and action. Legal accountability is based upon the action of the servant. *Tawḥīd* is *not* an attribute of Allah, the Exalted. Al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī said in his *al-Ta'rifāt*: "Lexically, *tawḥīd* means to judge and know that something is one. In the technical nomenclature of the people of spiritual reality it is 'Divesting the Divine Entity of everything that is conceptualized in understanding

Oneness is a negation of multiplicity in His Entity, attributes, and actions. He, the Glorified, has no likeness in His Entity, attributes, or actions. The oneness of the Entity negates both continuous quantity [*kam muttaṣil*] and discrete quantity [*kam munfaṣil*]. Negation of continuous quantity is a negation of His Entity being composed[40] of indivisible elements and accidents, or being

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and conceived in the imaginations and minds.' *Tawḥīd* consists of three elements: knowledge of Allah in His Godhood, conviction in His oneness, and negating all equals unto Him." (*F*)

[40] Generally, compositeness means "the possibility of dividing an essence, even if only conceptually." So in other words, even if there was no real division that took place, the mere conceptual possibility of it implies by necessity [that something] is composite. This meaning is an absolute and binding implication upon the anthropomorphists, and it is not possible for them to claim that it is conceptually impossible for the Most Exalted to be made up of composite parts, for their doctrine is based upon the belief that He is in a locus and above a place—the Throne—and that He is in spatial contact [with it]. These are the basic conditions that are sufficient to establish the conceptual possibility of compositeness. Contemplate this well for it is very useful.

There are two points to consider here: [one] the distinction between two concepts within the mind, meaning that the mind conceives of something and says to itself that this thing (A) is different from that thing (B), and, [two] the distinction between two parts, even if only conceptually. Regarding the former, it is not understood to be composite according to the meaning of what is said here, because here [we are] speaking of the assumption that the Divine Entity has a specific quantity, as the anthropomorphists believe, so it is not appropriate to cite the difference between the Divine Entity and the attributes and claim that the Ash'arīs are bound by rational implication to also believe in compositeness. This is incorrect, because the relationship between the Divine Entity and the attributes is not a relationship of quantification and direction, so the implication of compositeness does not apply to them as it does the anthropomorphists. For this reason the Ash'arīs say that the attributes are neither the Entity nor other than the Entity.

You should also know that not every conceptual difference necessarily implies actual compositeness in reality. For example, rationally speaking, the understanding of the term "human" is composed of two things: [one] an animal and [two] articulate. With this, however, it composed of anything else, even if it is not indivisible elements and accidents, such as [being composed of] primary matter [*hayūlī*] and form [*ṣūra*] or any other imagined thing. Compositeness is impossible for Allah, the Exalted, for if He were composed, He would be contingent, because by necessity, every composite thing is in need. Negation of discrete quantity is a negation of another Entity being necessarily qualified with the perfection that is necessary for Allah, or a being from whom it is negated and declared impossible things that are impossible for Him [Allah]. This is impossible because Allah has no partner or equal.

The oneness of the attributes negates both continuous [*muttaṣil*] and discrete [*munfaṣil*] quantity. Negation of continuous quantity is a negation of Him possessing "two powers," "two wills," and so on for the remaining attributes. Nay, His omnipotence is one, His will is one, and His knowledge is one;[41] however, His omnipotence is linked with all rationally possible things, His knowledge unveils all things that are known, and His will is a specification directed to all rationally possible things. The same is to be said regarding all of His attributes—so multiplicity of His attributes is impossible.

Negation of discrete quantity negates anything of the creation possessing attributes like those of Allah, the Exalted, such as someone possessing an omnipotence that brings into existence, a will that that specifies, and a comprehensive and all-encompassing knowledge, and other matters. This is impossible because nothing resembles Allah.

The oneness of actions negates only discrete [*munfaṣil*] quantity. Negation of discrete quantity is a negation of others performing actions like His actions; this is impossible because Allah possesses

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cannot be said that "human" is actually a composite. As for the second point made above, it necessitates compositeness, which in turn necessitates a real need. (*F*)

[41] Allah's knowledge is linked to everything that is known. His will is one in itself and is linked to everything that is rationally possible. His omnipotence is one in itself and is also linked with everything that is rationally possible. (*F*)

no partner in His actions; rather, He is the One who is singular in the power to bring into being and bring into non-being.[42]

Besides having acts established within them through their acquisition thereof, created beings have no efficacy in their acts: all of them belong to Allah, the Exalted.[43]

The proof that it is necessary for Allah to be described with oneness is found in the Book, the Sunna, consensus, and in rational argument. As for its proof in the Book, it is in the statement of the Exalted: ﴾*And your God is One God.*﴿ [al-Baqara: 163]. Its proof in the Sunna is in his ﷺ statement: "Indeed, Allah is Single [*Witr*] and He loves that which is single."[44]

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[42] The multiplicity of His actions is affirmed and it is incorrect to deny it from Him; for indeed, His actions are numerous, such as creating, providing, enriching, impoverishing, honouring, abasing, and the like. (*M*)

All of these actions come from Him because He is the All-Powerful, the Willing, and the All-Knowing, even though His omnipotence, knowledge, will, and Entity are one. Multiplicity coming from one is not rationally impossible as is claimed by some of the philosophers. (*F*)

[43] There is no act within existence that belongs to other than Him, the Sublime and Majestic. Rather, He is the Ultimate Doer of all actions [*al-Faʿāl*]. The actions that manifest themselves upon the hands of creation are only via their acquisition [*kasb*] thereof, and this is the relationship of the emergent and contingent power with the act when it is brought into being. For instance, when someone wants to stand up, it is Allah, the Exalted, who creates both that standing and the power for the servant that accompanies him when it is brought into being. That contingent power does not possess independent effect in the act of standing (and all other acts); rather, it only accompanies it. ﴾*And Allah created you all and that which you do.*﴿ (*Ṭ*)

[44] This was narrated by al-Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ* from ʿAlī who said: "The odd unit prayer is not a duty like your proscribed prayers; however, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made it a *sunna* and said: 'Indeed, Allah is Single [*Witr*], and He loves that which is single [odd], so perform the odd unit prayer, O people of the Qur'an!'" In this section there are similar reports from Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn Masʿūd, and Ibn ʿAbbās. Abū ʿĪsā [al-Tirmidhī] said: "The Hadith of ʿAlī is a fair Hadith" Imam al-Nasāʾī narrated in his *Sunan al-Kubrā* from ʿAlī who said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Indeed, Allah is Single, and He loves that which is single, so perform the odd unit prayer, O people of the Qur'an!'" It was also narrated in *al-Mujtabā* from ʿAlī who said: "On one occasion the

Here, single means He who is One and Alone. As for the consensus, the Umma is in unanimous agreement that Allah is One. As for the rational proof, it shall soon be presented.

3.3 THE QUALITATIVE ATTRIBUTES [*ṢIFĀT AL-MAʿĀNĪ*]

The qualitative attributes[45] are the attributes of being. A qualitative attribute is an attribute that exists in itself, is

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Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed the odd unit prayer and said: 'O people of the Qur'an! Perform the odd unit prayer, for Allah is Single and He loves that which is odd.'" Al-Ḥākim narrated in his *Mustadrak* the expression "He is Single and He loves that which is odd" in the Hadith of Abū Hurayra that enumerates the [ninety-nine] Beautiful Names. Al-Ḥākim also narrated in his *Mustadrak* from Abū Hurayra that the Prophet ﷺ said: "When one of you performs the dry wiping [after relieving oneself] then let him use an odd number, for Allah is Single and He loves that which is odd." Al-Ḥākim said that this narration is rigorously authentic based upon the conditions of the two authentic collections [al-Bukhārī and Muslim]." It is also found in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd, al-Bayhaqī, and Ibn Mājah, all from 'Alī ﷺ. The last report was also narrated from 'Abdullāh b. Masʿūd and Abū Hurayra. The narrations for this report are too many to enumerate here. (*F*)

[45] The qualitative attributes are additional to the Divine Entity and exist in themselves and yet are inseparable from the Divine Entity. These attributes are eternal and it is impossible for them to be in a state of non-being. He is Living with life, All-Knowing with knowledge, and so on. Know also that the necessity of the qualitative attributes' existence is intrinsic just as the necessity of the Divine Entity's existence is intrinsic. They are not merely possible in themselves and necessary by the necessary existence of the Divine Entity—as opposed to the position of Saʿd [al-Taftazānī] who followed al-Rāzī in his view, and who was himself followed by al-Bayḍāwī and a group of others. Al-Tilmisānī rebuked him for this... (*Ṣ*)

Al-Sanūsī and others, like al-Ṣāwī, also rebuked him for this; however, the truth of the matter is that this issue does not call for such severity. The intent of the other scholars was *not* that certain attributes are merely possible, thus entailing that they are contingent. What they meant by "possibility" was that the qualitative attributes are conditioned upon the [the existence] of the Divine Entity in order for them to exist. This meaning is correct, for the qualitative attributes cannot exist by themselves because it is impossible for an attribute to subsist outside of an Entity. The latter day theologians severely established within the existent being, and necessarily predicates a certain judgment. Do not suppose that when we say that it exists in itself that this implies the possibility of its own self-subsistence; rather, it only subsists within the Entity. The meaning of "necessarily predicates" means that it is inseparable [from the Entity]. Judgment here refers to predicating a certain judgment:[46] therefore, omnipotence predicates that He is the

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criticized al-Rāzī and those who adopted his position on this issue. They interpreted his words in ways the words themselves did not indicate or support. Having said this, there is agreement that the words of al-Rāzī were not appropriate—even if it is assumed that the meanings of his words were correct. The reader should observe that the majority of the theologians believed that everything qualified by possibility is contingent. Al-Rāzī, and others who followed him, however, differed with them and said that it is possible that there exist something that is both possible and eternal. This is in accordance with what is understood from the apparent words of Sa'd [al-Taftazānī], who [stated] that in al-Rāzī's words, "possible" is not unrestricted, and that instead it means only some possibilities—not unrestrictedly as it occurred to the minds of many theologians.

Know also that along with this, Imam al-Rāzī was not compelled by implication to admit that contingent attributes subsist with Allah, the Exalted, because the attributes, according to him, are ascriptions, which are in themselves non-existent. (*F*)

[46] That is to say, it is not permissible to assume that what is meant here by "predicate" is causation, lest it imply that the Divine Entity brought the attributes into being or that some attributes brought other attributes into being. All of this is false. What is meant rather is that the attributes and the Divine Entity are inseparable, *not* that the Divine Entity affects the attributes, or vice versa. Being subject to cause is a proof of imperfection, even if it is assumed that the Entity acted upon itself. It is still considered imperfection because being subject to cause means that something non-existent is brought into existence, or vice versa. That which results from this is either perfection or imperfection. If it is imperfection it implies that the Divine Entity is described with imperfection—and this is impossible. If that which comes about is perfection it implies that the Divine Entity was previously imperfect, and this is false, even if one were to argue that the Divine Entity became perfected after that. The belief that the Divine Entity brings about perfection in Himself is the belief of the anthropomorphists who allow for contingent events to subsist within the Divine Entity, and this belief

All-Powerful [*al-Qādir*], will predicates that He is Willing, and so on. The qualitative attributes are seven:[47] omnipotence, will, knowledge, life, hearing, sight, and speech.[48]

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is false. Ibn Taymiyya and his companions were among those who held this view, and it goes against the way of *Ahl al-Sunna*. Ibn Taymiyya claimed that there is no evidence showing that added perfection to the Divine Entity in this way is false; on the contrary, according to him, it is obligatory for the Divine Entity. This is how he painted the truth as false and falsehood as truth. We have clarified this point in detail in our book *The Small Disclosure Regarding the Doctrine of Ibn Taymiyya*, so take notice. (*F*)

[47] The qualitative attributes are seven and not more because the decisive and clear-cut proofs only indicate these seven and do not prove that other than these seven are anyhow different. If, for example, we were to say that Allah is the Fashioner [*al-Muṣawwir*], we do not understand from that Name anything other than the fact that He creates and shapes images. Allah's creation of images is based upon Him being All-Powerful, Willing, and All-Knowing, and so on. The Creator must be All-Powerful, Willing, and All-Knowing. The same may be said for the Name "the Avenger" [*al-Muntaqim*], and so on. If we were to look into all of Allah's Beautiful Names mentioned in the Book and the Sunna we shall see that they all refer back to what we have mentioned here. This is what we mean when we say that there is no proof indicating that the other Divine Names point to other attributes besides these seven. The most we are saying is that there is no detailed evidence for any other additional attributes. The general proofs indicate that Allah's perfections are limitless, although we are unable to know them in detail. There is no incontrovertible and clear-cut proof in the Book or the Sunna that indicates other than these [seven] attributes. The basic rule is that we must hold fast to the clear-cut proof, especially when it concerns the Divine Entity of Allah or His attributes. As for the reports that ascribe a face, hand, and eye to Allah, the Exalted, they all refer back to these seven attributes and are not superadded to them. (*F*)

[48] THE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION CONCERNING
THE ATTRIBUTE OF APPREHENSION [*IDRĀK*]

The scholars have disagreed about the attribute of apprehension [*idrāk*]: does Allah, Exalted is He, possess another attribute in addition to these seven that is called "apprehension," by which He apprehends what is touched, tasted, and smelled? Can it be argued that it is a perfection and that every perfection must be affirmed for Him, or is it said that it is not affirmed because it has not been ascribed to Allah and the attribute of knowledge is enough? The most correct view is to refrain from

3.3.1 OMNIPOTENCE AND WILL

Omnipotence[49] is a beginningless attribute by which all possible things are either brought into being or non-being in accordance

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judgment one way or another [either affirmation or negation], because, even though it has not been reported [as an attribute] it is a perfection, so we neither affirm it nor negate it. The rational proof in support of it is weak; just because it entails perfection for the contingent creation does not imply that it is perfection for the pre-eternal. (*Ṣ*)

Even though the esteemed Ḥanafī Māturīdīs affirm that Allah apprehends the material things, they negate that His apprehension is by way of physical contact—as some anthropomorphists claimed against them. Apprehension is akin to knowledge, and Allah is not in need of physical contact in order to know, so take notice of this. (*F*)

[49] It is obligatory for you to affirm that omnipotence is only one. The proof for this is that if it were more than one it would necessitate two affecting agents upon a single effect. It is also obligatory for you to affirm that it [Allah's omnipotence] is all-inclusive and that it is linked with all rationally possible things. The proof for this is that if it were not linked to something that is rationally possible it would necessitate that He is incapable. The takeaway from all of this is that in linkage and obtainment, the *effective* [*tanjīzī*] linkage is connected with the effective linkage of the Divine will, and the Divine will is connected with knowledge. But this is [simply a mental abstraction] not in actual succession, because both [will and knowledge] are pre-eternal. This is what is meant by their statement that it is obligatory to have faith in pre-ordainment and Divine decree [*qaḍā'* and *qadr*]. Pre-ordainment [*qaḍā'*] is the exact linkage between the effective will and the effective knowledge, while the Divine decree is the exact linkage between the effective power [*qudra*] and the effective will that has taken place—according to those who hold that view. (*Ṣ*)

The possibility of the potential linkage [*ta'alluq ṣulūḥī*] is agreed upon and no one disagreed with it save some odd groups of the *Mu'tazila*. The argument of mutual hindrance [*dalīl al-tamānu'*] is only valid if it is already assumed that there is an effective linkage and not a potential linkage. In other words, it is valid only if it is assumed that there is an effective linkage, and it is a condition for it that it is linked with an action, and the mere actualization of a potential linkage is sufficient to establishing an effective linkage. (*F*)

If the effective [will] was not linked, inability would be ascribed [to Allah], because even though it has a potential linkage, it is not connected with an action, and the reason for this lack of linkages is either from the Divine Entity or it is from other than the Divine Entity.

with the Divine will.[50] Will is a beginningless attribute that brings about specification[51] of something that is possible with something that is possible and in accordance with Divine knowledge.[52]

No matter what the case may be, both would imply that it is affected by an affecting agent or that it is specified—the former would imply infinite regress or a vicious circle [*circulus vitiosus*], and the later would clearly imply inability. (*F*)

[50] This means that when Allah brings possible things into being or non-being it is in accordance to His Divine will, for He, with His omnipotence, does not bring contingent things into being or non-being unless He wills to bring them into being or non-being. From this we learn that the linkage of omnipotence is related to the linkage of Divine will, which is to say that it succeeds it rationally. (*M*)

This succession mentioned here is not a temporal following contained in time, as might be imagined by some people. On the contrary, it is only a rational conception that is the product of discernment. That is to say, the intellect cannot comprehend one who is omnipotent save that he is also willing; so believing in the Divine will is a rational condition for believing in the Divine omnipotence. (*F*)

[51] The linkage of specification here is a rational metaphor [*majāz 'aqlī*] from the realm of linking something with its cause; otherwise, the One who specifies in reality is the Divine Entity. Similar to this is linking independent effect to omnipotence—according to the view of some—in that an attribute acts upon something that is a contingent being or non-being; this is also considered a rational metaphor from the same realm because in reality the One who acts upon others is the Divine Entity; there is no action save that it belongs to Him—as was stated by many of the verifying scholars. (*B*)

[52] This means that Allah's specification of something that is possible is in accordance with His knowledge, because He, the Sublime and Majestic, does not specify any contingent thing with His Divine will—be it good or evil—except that He knows. So every contingent thing that Allah knows will or will not "be," then that is His will. From this we learn that the linkage of will is related the linkage of the Divine knowledge. In other words, in the rational mind [discernment], it follows it. (*M*)

What was said regarding the Divine omnipotence and will is said here as well; the meaning of his statement that within the rational mind the will succeeds knowledge, is that it is not possible to rationally conceive of one who wills except that he also possesses knowledge. This succession is not a temporal one contained in time as some might imagine. Due to this arrangement the scholars have called these three

There are six things permissible for contingencies: existence, a specified time, a specified place, a specified quantity, a specified location, and a specified quality—all of these together with their converse.

These two attributes [omnipotence and will] call for something in addition to their both being established, called "linkage" [*taʿalluq*]. The attribute of will possesses two linkages:[53] [one] pre-eternal potentiality [*ṣulūḥī qadīm*] and [two] pre-eternal effectiveness [*tanjīzī qadīm*]. Omnipotence has only two linkages: [one] pre-eternal potentiality and [two] contingent effectiveness [*tanjīzī ḥādith*]. These two attributes are linked with contingencies only;[54] hence, there is no linkage with something that is

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attributes [knowledge, power, and will] the "arranged attributes." You should also know that this arrangement is strongly connected to understanding the Divine decree and pre-ordainment. Understanding this arrangement helps one unravel the misconceptions and specious arguments spread by those who are not adept in doctrinal matters, who claim that because Allah is the Creator of the servant's actions it means that they are compelled and forced to do those actions. This is a naïve understanding unfounded upon knowledge or sound investigation. (*F*)

[53] So in summary, the Divine will has three linkages according to the view that there is a contingent effectiveness, although in reality, contingent effectiveness is a manifestation of the pre-eternal effectiveness and not a separate linkage in itself. Based upon this there are only two linkages: pre-eternal potentiality and pre-eternal effectiveness. (*B*)

In his commentary upon the didactic text of Ibn ʿĀshir, Ibn Kīrān said: "Some of them added another linkage for will, namely contingent effectiveness, when that which is decreed is manifested in its particular time. The truth of the matter is that pre-eternal effectiveness is sufficient in establishing that." Someone might say that there is only pre-eternal potentiality and contingent effectiveness, so contemplate this well. (*F*)

[54] It shouldn't be said that because [Allah's will and omnipotence] are not linked with that which is necessary or impossible, it attributes inability [*ʿajz*] to Him. On the contrary, we say that there is no inability or incapability—even if this is imagined by some foolish innovators. Inability and incapability are only implied in that to which it *is possible* for the Divine will and omnipotence to be linked, yet was *not* linked. As for that to which they [the Divine will and omnipotence] *cannot* be

necessary or impossible,[55] because if these two attributes were linked with bringing something necessary into existence it would imply the acquisition of what is already acquired [*taḥṣīl al-ḥāṣil*], and that is rationally false. If these two attributes were linked with eliminating something that is necessary it would imply the altering of realities [*qalb al-ḥaqā'iq*]. That which is necessary cannot be eliminated, because if it were it would no longer be necessary, and it is impossible for that which is necessary to be unnecessary. Similarly, if these two attributes were linked with eliminating something that is impossible, it would imply the

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possibly linked, this implication does not hold. There is no doubt that they [the Divine will and omnipotence] cannot possibly be linked to things that are necessary or impossible. (*M*)

In other words, it is impossible because it would imply the alteration of realities [*qalb al-ḥaqā'iq*], or that both the necessary and the impossible both become contingent possibilities. (*F*)

[55] Contrary to its linkage to that which is possible, it is not inability for the Divine omnipotence to *not* be linked with that which is necessary or impossible. As for al-Ghazālī's statement: "There is no possibility of anything more perfect than what already exists," many scholars of old found it enigmatic, for it implies inability—which is impossible for Him [Allah]. There have been many interpretations given [to his words]. Some said that what he meant by possibility was the possibility of the creation, so his statement would mean that there is not to be found within the possibility of the creation any change to what Allah has willed and originated. Another view states that what was meant was the possibility of Allah when considering the beginningless linkage to His knowledge, and that the linkage of the contingent effectiveness can only be according to proceeding knowledge, otherwise, it would imply that knowledge became ignorance. Another view states that what is meant was that there is no possibility to make pre-eternal that which is contingent. (*Ṣ*)

Al-Biqā'ī objected to al-Ghazālī's statement and claimed that it attributed inability to Allah, the Exalted. It has been argued, however, that this statement means it is not possible to find anything more perfect than this universe because Allah's will and omnipotence are not linked to it [other than this universe] so as to bring it into existence. Had Allah willed, He could create a universe even more perfect than this universe; hence, there is nothing in his [al-Ghazālī's] words that imply an ascription of inability to Allah, the Exalted—as al-Biqā'ī mistakenly imagined, and which caused him to object to al-Ghazālī. (*B*) acquisition of what is already acquired. If these two attributes were linked with making something rationally impossible it would imply the altering of realities, and both of these two are false, for that which is impossible cannot be existent.[56]

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[56] The fact that the Divine omnipotence is not linked with the two [that which is necessary and that which is impossible] does not imply inability, because that is not its role. In addition, if Divine omnipotence was linked to the two it would necessitate corruption because it would imply that it is linked with [the possibility] of terminating the Exalted Divine Entity, stripping away from Him the qualities of Godhood, and so on. This illustrates the meanness of the claim made by some innovators, who say that Allah is capable of taking a son, for—as they argue—if He was incapable of that He would not be All-Powerful. (*B*)

The individual al-Bājūrī was alluding to in this abovementioned quote was Ibn Ḥazm al-Ẓāhirī who said in his book *al-Milal wal-Niḥal*: "Likewise for the one who asks, 'Is Allah able to take a son?' The answer is that He is capable of that." It is obvious that his words are false and that his inference from the verse: ❪*Had Allah wanted to take a son, He would have chosen those whom He wills from those He creates*❫ is flawed. The meaning of "take" in this verse has been explained in the verse itself to mean "to be chosen" [*iṣṭifā'*], and the specification of the answer to ❪*Had...*❫ here with the word ❪*...chosen...*❫ proves that "taking" in any other form is impossible. The meaning of ❪*...chosen...*❫ in this verse is to look after something.

As for taking a son according to the conventional meaning, in which a person has a son—which is the meaning that Ibn Ḥazm permitted [for Allah] in his words—this is not the apparent meaning of the verse. It is false and invalid, both rationally and textually. It is not hidden that Ibn Ḥazm's words are shaky; the Imam Ibn al-'Arabī refuted him in *al-'Awāṣim min al-Qawāṣim*. He said: "So look at this terrible calamity: see how he was ignorant of [the distinction between what is] permissible and impossible in the intellect and rational faculties, and what is understood from words. These words are not intelligible, for his question 'Is Allah able to take son?' is meaningless, because it cannot be conceived that Allah would have a son, nor is it possible. Therefore, the real meaning of the question is: 'Can Allah—the One who cannot have son—have a son? So the last part of the question contradicts the first part. It is irrational and does not warrant a reply."

Many scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna* have refuted Ibn Ḥazm, and some people in this day and age have become beguiled by his statement and were led to uttering blasphemies even worse than it. I heard one say that had Allah willed to terminate His existence He could have done so! This is disbelief in Allah, the All-Mighty. The same person said that had Allah willed to beget a child He would have done so! This statement is even worse that Ibn Ḥazm's, because Ibn Ḥazm's wording carries a meaning that is conceivably possible, as we clarified, even if it is farfetched and impermissible. With this wording however, that is not the case. (*F*)

Al-Bājūrī was asked about the disbelief of the one who says "Allah is not able to expel me from His kingdom." He answered: "Such a person is not guilty of disbelief because it *is* impossible for such a person to be expelled from His kingdom, because it is not possible for there to exist a kingdom for anyone else, so He cannot exile him to it. Divine omnipotence is not linked with that which is impossible so there is no harm in this, just as there is no harm if it is said that Allah cannot take a son, a wife, or the like."

I say: This response is weak. Had al-Bājūrī said that Allah's omnipotence is not linked with that which is impossible, it would have been better. When you say that Allah is "not able," it indicates imperfection because it implies that that Divine omnipotence *is* linked with it, however He is not able. The proper answer is to say that the basis for Divine omnipotence is that it is not linked with that which is impossible, because the impossible cannot exist in the first place. There is a distinction between saying that He is *not able*, and saying that the Divine omnipotence is *not linked* with it. To clarify this, when we say that someone is not able to create the wing of a gnat, there are two possible meanings for that statement: [one] That this person can *potentially* create, but there is something to prevent him from creating it, and [two], that this person cannot potentially create anything in the first place, and for that reason he is unable to create the wing of a gnat.

It is obvious that the first possible meaning implies that there is an imperfection in his power and a clear cut inability, whereas this is not the case with the second possible meaning—and there is a vast difference between the two. The same may be said regarding the one who says that Allah cannot do the impossible. It carries these same two possible meanings. On the other hand, when we say that Allah's omnipotence is not linked with that which is impossible in the first place, this meaning only implies that the impossible thing is lacking in the potentiality of being acted upon with omnipotence. The efficiency of the Divine omnipotence is one, so the imperfection is from that which is impossible, not from the omnipotence. This meaning articulated here does not imply any type of imperfection. But because of the ignorance some had of this distinction, they thought that our prohibition of the first statement was only out of the obligation of observing proper etiquette with Allah, but this is not the case.

The proof in the Book that it is obligatory for Allah to be described with omnipotence is His statement: ❬*Indeed Allah is All-Powerful over all things.*❭ [al-Baqara: 148]. The One who is All-Powerful is He who possesses omnipotence.

One should note that in this case, delivering a legal verdict is formed from two components: [one] the legal judgment that answers the question "Is the one who says this guilty of disbelief or not?" and [two] the legal reasoning for this ruling. My critique here [of al-Bājūrī's] words is only directed at the reasoning and not the legal ruling itself. I'll go one step further and say regarding the one who believes that Allah's omnipotence is not linked to that, that he might in fact be guilty of disbelief if he thinks that it is correct for such a thing to be linked to Allah's omnipotence. If that is not the case then his expression is mistaken because of its aforementioned ambiguity. By ambiguity, we mean that the answer is incomplete as it should be in the domain of delivering legal verdicts, so attention must be given to this because of the possible false meanings contained in the verdict. When taking all of these things into consideration, we say that the answer is sound, and Allah knows best, so contemplate this well.

What I have analyzed here is supported by Imam al-Shahrastānī in *Nihāya al-Iqdām* (p. 47): "Regarding that which cannot exist, should not said that the Creator, Exalted is He, is not capable over it. Nay, it should be said: 'That which is intrinsically impossible is not decreed, so it its existence is inconceivable.'"

In addition to this, I found a text from one of the scholars of the Maghreb, Shaykh Aḥmad b. Muhammad al-Tafjarūtī, a scholar of the tenth century. He said in his book *Notifying the Heedless One Regarding Things He Thinks He Knows Despite His Actual Ignorance of Them*: "Furthermore, if it is asked: 'Is it permissible for one to say that Allah is *not* able to do the impossible and that He is *not* capable over it?' we respond by saying: This is impermissible, because this expression seems to impute inability, and it is impermissible to employ ambiguous expressions concerning Allah, the Exalted, unless such expressions are revealed. The correct course is for one to say that Divine omnipotence is not linked with that which is impossible, or that the impossible is not decreed, and similar expressions that do not seem to impute inability to Him, the Glorified and Exalted. This is what our Imams رحمهم الله have mentioned and it is clear."

This illustrates that what we have established here is correct, and all praise is due to Allah. (*F*)

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This illustrates that what we have established here is correct, and all praise is due to Allah. (*F*)

Ahl al-Sunna are in unanimous agreement that Allah is described with both omnipotence and will. As for the rational proof, it shall soon be mentioned.

NOTICE

Contingencies are four categories: [1] a contingency that came into existence and passed into non-existence, [2] a currently existing contingency, [3] a contingency that shall come into existence in the future, and [4] a contingency that Allah knows shall never come into existence, such as the faith of Abū Jahl and the faith of other disbelievers who died upon disbelief. Clearly, the Divine will and omnipotence are linked with the first three categories. As for the fourth category, there is a difference of opinion concerning it.

This was explained by [Shihāb al-Dīn al-Maqqarī,] the author of *Iḍā'a al-Dujunna*:

And if it is [a contingency] known [by Him] to be negated
There is a difference regarding its linkage
Such as the faith of Abū Lahab
Some saw to reconcile [between the two views]
So whoever sees a linkage with it considers
That it is with regards to the basis of its possibility
Without looking to anything else;
Whereas he who negates it considers
The linkage of knowledge and sees that it was not possible

Abū Dāwūd narrated in his *Sunan* from 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, the client of Banū Hāshim, whose mother narrated to him (and she used to serve some of the daughters of the Prophet ﷺ) that one of the daughters of the Prophet ﷺ narrated to her that the Prophet ﷺ said: "When you wake up in the morning say: 'Glorified and Exalted is Allah, and to Him belongs all praise. There is no strength save by Allah. Whatever Allah wills shall come to pass and whatever He does not will shall not.' Know that Allah is All-Powerful over all things and that Allah's knowledge encompasses everything.' Whoever says this when he enters the morning [and he mentioned something similar in meaning] then he will be protected until he enters the evening, and whoever says this when he enters the evening will be safeguarded until he enters the morning." (*F*)

The correct view is that when looking at the basis of its possibility, the linkage is one of potentiality and not one of effectiveness.

3.3.2 KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is a beginningless attribute by which all that is known is manifested as it really is: a manifestation that does not carry the possibility of deficiency in any way whatsoever. Some have said that knowledge is a beginningless attribute linked with what is known, through encompassment without there being anything previously hidden.[59]

Knowledge is linked with all necessary, impossible, and permissible things by way of pre-eternal effectiveness [*tanjīzī qadīm*]. An example of the necessary is Allah's Divine Entity, His attributes, and His Names; He knows these in their reality. An example of the impossible is Allah having a wife, child, partner, and all other deficiencies; He knows that these are impossible and negated from Him. Regarding that which is permissible, He knows all things that are permissible and contingent, and their attributes and names. The proof from the Book for the attribute of knowledge is His statement: ﴾*Allah is All-Knowing of all things.*﴿ [al-Nisā': 176]. The proof in the Sunna is when the Messenger ﷺ mentioned "The All-Knowing" among the Beautiful Names of Allah, the Exalted.[60] *Ahl al-Sunna* are in unanimous agreement that Allah is All-Knowing with knowledge. As for the rational proof, it shall soon be presented.

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[59] "Knowledge is a real attribute established with the Divine Entity. It is linked to all things as they truly are with encompassment and without there being anything previously hidden." This was the expression of al-Kamāl, and it is better than what others have said. (*B*)

By al-Kamāl he meant al-Kamāl b. al-Humām, the well known scholar and author of *al-Musāmara*, the commentary of *al-Musāyara* in theology. (*F*)

[60] I have referred several times to the Hadith enumerating Allah's Beautiful Names. (*F*)

NOTICE

The linkage of knowledge is entirely of pre-eternal effectiveness and does not have a linkage of potentiality, because whoever can potentially know more is not All-Knowing at all.

3.3.3 LIFE

Life is a beginningless attribute that qualifies the one possessing it to be described with the qualities of apprehension. What is meant here by the qualities of apprehension are the qualities of hearing, sight, and knowledge—not what is [normally] understood by the term "apprehension."[61] Life is a rational pre-condition for all of the qualitative attributes. Its non-existence implies a lack of perception, whereas its existence does not imply either the existence or non-existence of perception. Perception is necessary for Allah because of the evidence establishing it.

Life is not linked with anything;[62] rather, it is a pre-condition for the other qualitative attributes and it itself is not linked with anything. In other words, for its establishment, life does not seek something additional to it, so it is not from the attributes of effecting, such as omnipotence and will, nor is it from the attributes that make things manifest, such as hearing, sight, and knowledge, nor is it from the attributes of indication, such as speech.

The proof in the Book for the obligation of life is His statement: ﴾*And put your trust in the Living who does not die.*﴿ [al-Furqān: 58]. Proof from the Sunna is found in the Prophet's statement ﷺ:

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[61] That is to say, not the understanding of it as a unique attribute, rather as its meanings are affirmed. (*F*)

[62] This means that it does not imply something additional to it, unlike the other qualitative attributes, for they imply something additional to themselves. Omnipotence implies something that is decreed by which that thing is either brought into existence or non-existence. The Divine will implies that there is something willed by which it is specified. Knowledge implies something that is known, hearing implies something that is heard, sight implies something that is seen, and speech implies a meaning that indicates it. (*M*)

"O Allah! The Living and Self-subsistent!"[63] The Umma is in unanimous agreement that Allah is Living with life. As for the rational proof, it shall soon be presented.

3.3.4 HEARING AND SIGHT

Hearing and sight are both beginningless attributes by which Allah makes every existing thing manifested and disclosed. The disclosure through hearing is different from the disclosure through sight. These are two attributes, as mentioned in the revelation, and faith in them is obligatory. They do not add any more disclosure than knowledge does; rather, they are unique in their reality and specific linkage. They are linked to existents, be they pre-eternal, such as His Divine Entity and existing attributes, or contingent existents, such as the essences of beings and their existent attributes. The linkage [of hearing and sight] to His Entity and existing attributes is a pre-eternal effective link, and the linkage to the essences of beings and their existing attributes[64] is a contingently effective and pre-eternal potential linkage. The proof in the Book for the obligation of hearing and sight is His statement: ﴾*And He is the All-Seeing and All-Hearing.*﴿ The proof from the Sunna is the Prophet's statement ﷺ when he passed by people seeking rain and raising their voices in supplication: "People! Go easy on yourselves, for you are not calling upon one who is deaf or blind. You are calling upon One who is All-Hearing and All-Seeing."[65] The Umma unanimously agrees that Allah is All-Hearing and All-Seeing. The rational proof shall be presented.

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[63] This was narrated by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* from Anas b. Mālik ؓ who said: "We were with the Prophet ﷺ in a circle and there was a man who was standing and praying. After he bowed and prostrated, he said in his sitting supplication: 'O Allah! I ask You because to You belongs all praise; there is no god besides You; the Originator of the heavens and the earth; the Possessor of Might and Honour; O Living and Self-subsistent!' The Prophet ﷺ said: 'He has supplicated with Allah's Supreme Name, a Name that, if used in supplication, [it] will be answered, and if He is asked by it, He will give.'" This narration is rigorously authentic with the conditions of Muslim and was not narrated by the two [al-Bukhārī or Muslim]. It was narrated in a similar wording from Anas b. Mālik.

Al-Nasā'ī also narrated this supplication from Anas in his *al-Mujtabā*. The Prophet ﷺ would frequently say: "O Living and Self-subsistent [*yā Ḥayy yā Qayyūm*]!" This has been narrated in the *Sunan* collections. Al-Ḥākim and al-Nasā'ī (in *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*) narrated from 'Alī ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ supplicated with this in the battle of Badr. (*F*)

[64] Allah, the Glorified, pre-eternally sees his Exalted Entity and all of His existing attributes, which include His hearing and sight. In addition to this, He sees and hears all existing beings and all of their existing attributes, no matter what form they take. His hearing and sight are not conditioned upon [the created things] not being very distant or very

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quiet. Conventionally, our sight only relates to existents that are corporeal bodies [*ajsām*]: seeing their colours, movements, and stillness, with the condition that what is seen is in a frontal direction and that it is not too distant or too close. (*M*) This is because His hearing, Exalted is He, is one of His attributes and not a physical limb, as is imagined by the anthropomorphists, who say that Allah possesses two eyes and that one is distinct from the other (such that one's pointing to one eye is distinct from his pointing to the other) and that one of the eyes is to the right of the other. This is pure and unadulterated anthropomorphism, and Allah is far exalted above this and the other fabrications of the anthropomorphists. As for us, we say that just as Allah possesses the attribute of knowledge, He also possesses the attribute of hearing. His hearing is not with a physical limb or appendage as it is with the creation. The same is to be said with regards to His sight. (*F*)

[65] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī from Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī ؓ who said: "We were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and when we would enter a valley we would raise our voices declaring Allah's oneness and greatness. The Prophet ﷺ said to us: 'O people! Go easy on yourselves, for you are not invoking one who is deaf or absent. Indeed, He is with you; He is All-Hearing and Close, blessed is His Name and Exalted is He.'" In another narration from Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī it states: "You are invoking One who is All-Hearing and Close." In another narration from him it states: "You are invoking One who is All-Hearing and All-Seeing." This was narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* collection, al-Nasā'ī in *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, and Abū Dāwūd. Al-Bayhaqī narrated it from both him and Jābir b. 'Abdullāh. In *al-Muntakhab* 'Abd b. Ḥumayd narrated it from 'Abdullāh b. Qays and others. (*F*)

NOTICE

Know that He, the Exalted, hears His hearing with His hearing and sees His sight with His sight, just as He knows His knowledge with His knowledge. This is because the attributes of manifestation [*inkishāf*] are linked to themselves, unlike the efficient attributes, for they are only linked to contingencies.

3.3.5 SPEECH

Speech [*kalām*] is a meaning that self-subsists within the Divine Entity and manifests in diverse expressions. It is dissimilar to the genus of letters and sounds and it is transcendent beyond being qualified with forwarding [*taqdīm*], delay [*ta'khīr*], "wholeness" [*kull*], "someness" [*ba'ḍ*], intonation [*laḥn*], inflection [*i'rāb*], and all other types of modifications. Its linkage is the same linkage as knowledge.

The speech of Allah, the Exalted, is not with letters because letters are contingent. The speech of Allah is also without sound [*ṣawt*], because sounds are contingent as well. Letters and sound both contain forwarding and delay, whereas Allah's speech is exalted above that.[66]

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[66] The relied upon position among *Ahl al-Sunna* is that Allah's speech is without letter or sound—and this is the truth in which there is no doubt. Al-'Aḍud [al-Ījī] said that it is with pre-eternal letters and sounds; however, as the latter day scholars have mentioned, al-'Aḍud's position forces him to admit that Allah's speech contains forwarding and delay. He [al-'Aḍud], on the other hand, responded to this by saying that forwarding and delay come only from *our* letters because they come out of our vocal cords [*makhārij*], so He who is exalted above that also has speech that is exalted above that. Al-'Aḍud's comments are in agreement with the crass anthropomorphists, so they should not be given consideration.

A group that ascribed themselves to the Ḥanbalīs maintained that [His speech] is with letters and sounds, but when they are attributed to Him, the Exalted, they [the letters and sounds] are pre-eternal, and when they are attributed to contingent beings they are contingent. The falsehood of this is plain to see. (*B*)

It is not hidden that the words of al-'Aḍud are weak, and this was mentioned by Imam al-Sa'd [al-Taftazānī] in his commentary upon the *Nasafī Creed*. Al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī also explained in his commentary upon

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al-Mawāqif the basic view of al-'Aḍud. He mentioned that al-'Aḍud cited his opinion in only a particular point of speculative theology related to speech, so contemplate this well.

On the other hand, if, by sound and letters, al-'Aḍud meant what occurs in the knowledge of Allah, then he has a point, even though that is not the point of contention. You should be aware that some of the crass anthropomorphists who ascribe themselves to the Salaf—and the Salaf are innocent of them—have claimed that Allah's speech is composed of contingent and emergent letters and sounds that subsist within the Divine Entity, and that these [letters and sounds] are a product of His Divine will and omnipotence. In other words, [they believe] that Allah originates them within His Divine Entity after they did not previously exist and that individually, they are contingent, and as a whole [genus], they are pre-eternal. This means that each individual word is contingent; however, the genus of speech itself is pre-eternal because Allah speaks when He wills and His will is pre-eternal, and this, therefore, implies that His speech is individually contingent and pre-eternal as a whole.

This is a summary of Ibn Taymiyya's view as well as those who follow him, and he has explicitly declared it more than once in his works. You should know that this belief is false and draws upon no evidence from the Book or the Sunna. They arrived at this view by drawing analogies between the speech of the Creator and the speech of the creation. They said that since every type of speech they observe in the external world is composed of letters and sounds, and since it is affirmed that Allah speaks, His speech must therefore be with letters and sounds. This is an obvious analogy between the Creator and the creation and it is the most false of falsehoods. Just because the speech of the creation is with letters and sounds does not necessitate that Allah's speech is the same. In addition to this, we know that linguistically, speech amounts to indications, hand signals, and inner speech that every person senses within himself. A small child, for example, before he or she speaks with letters and sounds, speaks to his or herself with an inner speech. Inner speech precedes the speech of letters and sounds; nay, it is a condition for the existence of verbal speech. This is known by anyone who pays attention to a child as it learns to speak.

This is not the appropriate place to cite evidence in support of internal speech, so in conclusion, we say that their comparison [between the speech of Allah and the speech of the creation] is built upon a false premise. What's more, outer speech [of sound and letters] implies that the Divine Entity is deficient and that it finds more perfection [after speech] and that is clearly false. (*F*)

[Allah's speech] is neither [qualified with] audibility nor silence because both of these are [found in] contingent speech.

You should know that the Books revealed to the Messengers ﵇ are called the speech of Allah, the Exalted, because they manifested from Him in sequential emergence [*iḥdāthan wa-tarkīban*] and no one else. It is impermissible to say that Jibrīl ﵇ is the one who arranged these letters himself and then revealed it to our liege lord Muhammad ﷺ. These expressions [*alfāẓ*] are not the attribute of self, as is imagined by some. On the contrary, these things [the letters and expressions] rationally or conventionally indicate it [the attribute of self: speech] because the expressions are arranged and contingent,[67] whereas the attribute of speech—the attribute of self—cannot be like that because contingencies do not subsist with the Creator, the Sublime and Majestic. Based upon this, these words that were revealed to the Messengers ﵇ are called the speech of Allah, the Exalted[68] because they indicate *some* of the meanings of the beginningless internal speech [*kalām nafsī*]. The internal speech of Allah indicates all that is necessary, impossible, and possible. As for the speech that is revealed to the Messengers—may the blessings of Allah be upon them all—it indicates only a portion of the meanings of Allah's internal speech. In other words, the heavenly revealed books do not point to all of Allah's knowledge, nor do they point to all of the meanings of His internal speech.[69]

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[67] It is impermissible to say that the speech of Allah (here referring to the expressions of the Heavenly Books) is created or contingent, lest it be imagined that the pre-eternal speech is contingent. Similarly, it is impermissible to say that the Qur'an is created or contingent because the [word] "Qur'an" denotes both the inimitable expression revealed to our Prophet and master Muhammad ﷺ, and the attribute of speech that subsists within the Divine Entity. If it is stated in an absolute, general sense that the Qur'an is created or contingent someone might imagine that the attribute that subsists within the Divine Entity is in fact contingent. On the other hand, we say that yes, it is allowed to say that [the Qur'an is created] in a classroom setting. (*M*)

What he means is that it is allowed [to say that it is created] in order to dispel the notion that the arranged letters revealed to the Messenger ﷺ are pre-eternal and without beginning. (*F*)

[68] Just as the pre-eternal speech is called the speech of Allah, similarly the heavenly revealed Books are also called the speech of Allah. This is either because they indicate some of its translated meanings—hence it is said that it is the speech of Allah just as the translated speech of a sultan is still called the speech of the sultan and the words of the non-Arab Prophets and nations mentioned in the Qur'an is still called their speech, even though it is a translation of their speech and not their actual speech—or it is because Allah, the Exalted created those expressions and

Speech is linked with what is necessary, impossible, and possible, and this linkage is one of indication [*dalāla*] and informing.[70] An example of this speech indicating what is

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revealed it to His Messengers عليهم السلام via Jibrīl, so it is the speech of Allah inasmuch as it is a creation of Allah and not authored by the creation. (*M*)

[69] The expressions of the heavenly revealed Books indicate what is indicated by the pre-eternal speech. That is to say, it shares [with the pre-eternal speech] in what it indicates, but not in its entirety, rather only a part thereof. The pre-eternal speech indicates that which is necessary, possible, and impossible. The expressions are translations of some of what [the pre-eternal speech] indicates, and for this reason it differs from language to language; the expressions revealed in Arabic are called the Qur'an, the expressions revealed in Hebrew are called the Torah, and the expressions revealed in Syriac are called the Gospel and the Psalms. (*M*)

[70] The heavenly revealed Books indicate only a portion of what is indicated by the internal speech. No one but Allah can encompass all of what it or the Heavenly Books indicate. Furthermore, when Allah spoke to Mūsā عليه السلام, it was with the internal speech—this is the correct view according to the Ash'arīs and some Māturīdīs, contrary to some of the *Mu'tazila* and some Māturīdīs. Dividing the internal speech into command, prohibition, information, questions, threats, and promises is only with reference to what is indicated in physical speech; as for the pre-eternal attribute, it is impossible for it to be divided.

You should know that the speech of Allah is used as a homonym to denote both the physical speech and the internal speech that is a pre-eternal attribute. Hence, it is a conventional reality [*ḥaqīqa 'urfiyya*] in reference to both. The physical speech is that which contains letters and sound and it indicates some of what is indicated by the internal speech that is within Allah's Divine Entity. The internal speech is that which does not contain letters or sound and it is not described with forwarding or delay, or beginning or end. Its linkage is the same as that of knowledge, and it is pre-eternal and uncreated. (*Ṣ*) necessary is His statement: ❨*Say*: "*He is Allah, the One...*"❩ [al-Ikhlāṣ]. An example of this speech indicating what is possible is His statement: ❨*And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses.*❩ [al-Qaṣaṣ: 68]. An example of this speech indicating that what is impossible is His statement: ❨*If there were gods besides Allah in them* [*the heavens and the earth*] *they would have both fallen into corruption.*❩ [al-Anbiyā': 22].

The linkage of speech—in this case, that which indicates it—to what is necessary, possible, and impossible, is a pre-eternal effective linkage. As for commands and prohibitions, if neither of them refer to something that is a predicate [*khabar*] in meaning, then they both possess two linkages to the works of those who are legally responsible: a pre-eternal potential linkage before they are brought into being, and an effective contingent linkage after they are brought into being.

The proof from the Book that speech is necessary [for Allah] is His statement: ❨*And Allah spoke directly to Mūsā.*❩ [al-Nisā': 164]. The proof from the Sunna is the Prophet's statement ﷺ: "There is none of you except that his Lord shall speak to him on the Day of Judgment, there not being between them [Allah and him] any interpreter."[71] *Ahl al-Sunna* are in unanimous agreement that Allah speaks with pre-eternal and beginningless speech. The rational proof shall be presented.[72]

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[71] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī in his collection from 'Adī b. Ḥātim who said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'There is none of you except that his Lord shall speak to him on the Day of Judgment, there not being between them [Allah and him] any translator or a veil to cover him.'" Al-Tirmidhī also narrated it from 'Adī in his *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, as well as al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, al-Bukhārī in *Khalq Af'āl al-'Ibād*, Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan*, al-Bayhaqī in *al-Kubrā*, and Imam Aḥmad in his *Musnad*. (*F*)

[72] Al-Ṣāwī said: "The proof for [the attribute of] speech, as well as [the attributes of] hearing and sight is textual because the creation of the universe is not conditioned upon them." What he meant by this was that rationally, we cannot know the attributes of Allah unless they are indicated when we look into the [creation of the] universe. He said: "If you assert that it is possible for there to be a rational proof for it, saying that 'if He was not described with it He would be described with its opposite, and that is imperfection, which is impossible for Him,' I would respond by saying that this is only seen as an imperfection in the

NOTICE

You should know that according to the school of Imam al-Ash'arī and most of *Ahl al-Sunna*, Allah's speech to Prophet Mūsā ﵇ was by Him removing the barrier so he [Mūsā ﵇] could hear His pre-eternal speech that is not composed of letters and sound. Afterwards, he returned that barrier and he did not hear. [Allah's speech to Mūsā ﵇] does not mean that Allah, the Exalted, began His speech or stopped His speech after returning the barrier, because His speech is pre-eternal and that which is pre-eternal does not change or modify.

NOTICE

The qualitative attributes call for seven things: Their existence, their pre-eternality, their endlessness, their dissimilarity, their freedom from needing a determiner [*mukhaṣṣiṣ*], their oneness, and their general linkage to that to which they are linked—except for life, which only calls for six of these things.

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external world of contingencies, and the One who is Pre-eternal cannot be compared to the contingent. What is considered perfection for a contingent being is not necessarily perfection for Allah. Do you not see how having a wife and child is perfection for a contingent being but it is not perfection for the Pre-eternal? Hence, this rational proof is weak." (*Ṣ*)

By this, he meant that the rational faculties are not able to infer [Allah's attributes of] hearing, sight, and speech merely by the knowledge these [rational faculties] possess about the universe and its contingency. He was saying that it is a weak inference to infer that it is obligatory for Him [Allah] to be described with these attributes by asserting that if He were not, He would be described with their opposites, and that these opposites of blindness, deafness, and muteness are imperfections. His reason for this is because not everything that is considered perfection for a contingent being is considered perfection for the Pre-eternal. In addition to this, if a contingent being is described as blind if it lacks sight, this does not prove that if Allah is not described with sight that He is blind! It is possible that sight is not a complete perfection, therefore, it is not obligatory for Allah to be described with it, so contemplate this well. (*F*)

NOTICE

You should know regarding the qualitative attributes that it should not be said that they are the Entity, or that they are "other" than the Entity. They are like the number one among ten: not the ten itself or other than the ten.

"Sameness" is a forbidden expression and belief, because union is impossible. "Otherness" means separation from the Entity and this is also a forbidden expression and belief because it implies contingency.

3.4 THE PREDICATIVE ATTRIBUTES [*AL-ṢIFĀT AL-MAʿNAWIYYA*]

These attributes are called predicative attributes because they are ascribed to predicated meanings for the attributes.[73] You should know that this predication is from both sides [the Entity and the attributes].[74] The predicative attributes are:

3.4.1 HIM BEING ALL-POWERFUL

"Being" here means that it is affirmed. The One who is All-Powerful is capable of either doing or leaving off an action.

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[73] Him being All-Powerful is a necessary implication of omnipotence and Him being Willing is a necessary implication of will that subsists within His Divine Entity, and so on with the remaining five attributes. The reason why these seven things are necessary implications of the qualitative meanings is because all of the qualitative attributes are real attributes. Every real attribute, if subsisting within the one who is described with it (whether that one is pre-eternal or contingent) must acquire a state that cannot be affirmed without that attribute. So, he who possesses power must acquire a state, namely, that He is powerful over that to which His power is linked. This state is expressed by saying that He is All-Powerful with omnipotence. He who possesses knowledge must acquire a state, namely, that He is knowledgeable of that to which His knowledge is linked. This state is expressed by saying that He is All-Knowing with omniscience, and the same is said for the remaining attributes. (*M*)

[74] This point was mentioned by al-Bājūrī in his gloss on *The Foundational Proofs*. (*F*)

3.4.2 HIM BEING WILLING

This is a necessary quality for the Entity, and since Allah's Entity is described with will, it is necessary that He *is* Willing. The One who wills is He who decides on one contingent possibility over another.

3.4.3 HIM BEING ALL-KNOWING

This is a necessary quality for the Entity, and since Allah's Entity is described with knowledge, it is necessary that He *is* All-Knowing. One who is All-Knowing is He whose knowledge discloses all things that are necessary, impossible, and possible.

3.4.4 HIM BEING LIVING

This is a necessary quality for the Entity, and since Allah's Entity is described with Living, it is necessary that He *is* Living. One who is Living is He who can be described with having the attributes of perception.

3.4.5 HIM BEING ALL-HEARING

This is a necessary quality for the Entity, and since Allah's Entity is described with hearing, it is necessary that He *is* All-Hearing. One who is All-Hearing is He whose hearing discloses all existent beings.

3.4.6 HIM BEING ALL-SEEING

This is a necessary quality for the Entity, and since Allah's Entity is described with sight, it is necessary that He *is* All-Seeing. One who is All-Seeing is He whose sight discloses all existent beings.

3.4.7 HIM BEING SPEAKING

This is a necessary quality for the Entity, and since Allah's Entity is described with speech, it is necessary that He *is* described with speech. One who is described with speech is He whose speech points to that which is necessary, impossible, and possible.

The difference between the qualitative attributes and the predicative attributes is that the qualitative attributes are existent and discerned via intellection both in the mind and externally to the mind, whereas the predicative attributes are affirmed and discerned via intellection in the mind and not external to the mind.[75]

NOTICE

The predicative attributes were affirmed by those who affirm *aḥwāl* (modes), such as al-Qāḍī al-Bāqillānī and those who followed him. Imam al-Ash'ārī and the majority, however, negated *aḥwāl*. According to them, the predicative attributes refer back to the qualitative attributes and are expressions detailing the establishment of qualitative meanings within the Divine Entity.[76]

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[75] The *ḥāl* (mode) mentioned here is an attribute that is affirmed outside of the mind, subsisting within an existent, while being neither independently existent by itself nor completely non-existent. It is an intermediary mode between existence and non-existence. In other words, it has not reached the level of existence nor has it reached the level of non-existence, and since it has not reached the level of existence it cannot been seen. (*M*)

[76] The theologians disagreed about the affirmation of the *aḥwāl* (modes) mentioned here. A group among them affirmed them and said that the meaning of the seven predicative attributes is from that category. According to them, what is indicated by Him being All-Powerful is a state subsisting within the Divine Entity that is additional to the subsistence of omnipotence in His Entity. This, according to them, is also the indication of omnipotence. What is indicated by Him being Willing is a state subsisting within the Divine Entity that is additional to the subsistence of will in His Entity. This is said with respect to all of the remaining attributes. Imam al-Ash'arī and the verifying scholars were of the view that this *ḥāl* is negated. They said that affirmation of such a thing is impossible and that the indication of the seven predicative attributes is the establishment of the qualitative attributes within the Divine Entity—not additional attributes. According to them, the indication of Him being All-Powerful is the same thing as Him possessing omnipotence within His Entity. They maintain that this is also the indication of omnipotence as well—and the same is said with regard to the remaining attributes. According to the first view, the seven predicative attributes are considered attributes because they indicate modes and modes are attributes subsisting within the Entity and additional to the qualitative attributes subsisting therein. (*M*)

Notice

When we say "Him being All-Powerful, Him being Willing," and so on, we are referring to predicative attributes. Without the phrase "Him being" they become Names for the Divine Entity, such as the Willing and the All-Powerful, and so on.

Notice

There are four categories for those who affirm *aḥwāl*: the Entity, the qualitative attributes, the *aḥwāl* predicatives linked to the qualitative attributes, and then the Names. And there are three categories for those who negate *aḥwāl*: the Entity, the qualitative attributes, and the Names. According to this latter group, the predicative attributes refer to the qualitative attributes because they are conceptual [*iʿtibāriyya*]. For this reason, some of the scholars enumerated twelve attributes [only]. According to them, Being was the Entity itself and not a necessary quality of the Entity, so the predicative attributes express meanings and the remaining attributes are the five negating attributes.[77]

In this book we have taken the latter view, following al-Sanūsī and its commentary by al-Anṣārī. For this reason we included the seven predicative attributes as actual attributes. According to the former view, these seven are not considered attributes because what they indicate, namely, the subsistence of qualitative attributes within the Divine Entity, are not real attributes, rather they are something perceived only from a particular frame of reference. In other words, they are affirmed within the mind and not externally. This view—which is the most correct—was followed by Imam al-Sanūsī in his *ʿAqīda Ṣughrā al-Ṣughrā*. This was taken from the commentary of al-Mārghanī. (*F*)

[77] From what we have just mentioned, it is clear that the difference among the theologians is only regarding the indication of these seven: are they from the *aḥwāl* or are they conceptual? The theologians have unanimously agreed that these seven are necessary for Him, and they explicitly stated that denial of that is disbelief. So contemplate this well and do not be deceived. With Allah, the Exalted, is all success. (*M*)

What he means here is that whoever denies that Allah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful, and so on, has fallen into disbelief. On the other hand, if someone was to say that He [Allah], the Exalted, being All-Knowing is nothing more than He being described with knowledge, then no

3.5 SOME OF WHAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ALLAH, THE SUBLIME AND MAJESTIC

We say *some* of what is impossible because there is no end to the things that are impossible for Him. Negating any perfection from Him implies imperfection, and it is a must that Allah is declared exaltedly transcendent above that. Any imperfection the mind can envision is impossible for Allah. It is obligatory upon us to negate those things in a general sense [not specifically], and it is only obligatory upon us to know of twenty impossibilities, and they are the opposites[78] of the twenty necessary attributes. It is also obligatory upon us to know the twenty necessary attributes, for everything that negates them is impossible for Allah, the Exalted.

3.5.1 NON-EXISTENCE [*ʿADAM*]

This is the opposite of existence and is an expression that denotes nothingness. Existence is necessary for Allah and non-existence is impossible for Him.

3.5.2 CONTINGENCY [*ḤUDŪTH*]

This is the opposite of pre-eternality. Pre-eternality is necessary for Allah and contingency is impossible for Him. What is meant here by contingency is coming into being after non-existence.

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disbelief results from this difference. The consensus is with regards to the disbelief of the one who denies the predicative attributes—not the qualitative attributes. (*F*)

[78] Linguistically, an opposite is something contrary to something else, be it an existent or non-existent thing. In the technical sense of the word, it is defined as an actual thing that stands opposite of another actual thing. And although it is not possible for the two to come together, it is possible for both to be raised from something. An example of this is blackness and whiteness. Both are existing things and contrary to each other and neither can be together in one locus. It is possible, however, for both to be raised from one locus, such as an object being red and neither white nor black. What is meant here by opposite is its linguistic meaning. (*M*)

Everything that was non-existent and then came into existence is considered contingent.[79]

3.5.3 HAVING AN END

This is the opposite of endlessness. Endlessness is necessary for Allah and having an end is impossible for Him. What is meant here by having and end is coming to an end after having previously existed.

3.5.4 HAVING LIKENESS TO CONTINGENCIES[80]

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[79] The relation of opposition between contingency and pre-eternality is opposition between something and that which stands contradictory of it on the same level [*naqīḍ*], because [in reality,] the contradictory of pre-eternality is *non pre-eternality*, which is contingency in and of itself, and that is because there is no intermediary [term] between [contingency and non pre-eternality]. This is if contingency is explained according to its metaphorical meaning which is "renewal after non-existence." On the other hand, if we were to explain it according to its literal meaning —which is existence after non-existence—the relation of opposition would be between something and what is more particular than its contradictory, because the contradictory of pre-eternality is non pre-eternality, and this is inclusive of contingency according to the meaning given here as well as renewal after non-existence. Based upon this, contingency is more particular than non-pre-eternality, which is the contradictory of pre-eternality. (B)

[80] "Contingencies" is the plural of contingency. A contingency is that which came into existence after non-existence. This applies to everything besides Allah, the Exalted. Allah was, and there was nothing along with Him. Everything other than Allah is called a world [*ʿālam*] and it is two categories: substances and accidents.

A substance is that which subsists within itself and is not in need of another substance in which to subsist. Such substances include the bodies of animals, stones, trees, and so on. All of these things subsist within themselves. From among the qualities of substances is spatial contact, which is for something to take up an empty space the size of its substance. Every substance takes up a space the size of its body, taking from the space that is between the heavens and the earth. A tall substance, for instance, will take up space according to its length; a short substance will take up space according to shortness, and so on.

This is the opposite of the necessary dissimilarity that Allah must have [from contingent things]. Likeness is impossible for Him, and it is an expression denoting resemblance between [His] Entity, attributes, and action and those of contingent beings.[81]

Hence, it is impossible for Allah's Divine Entity to take up space, to be a physical mass, to be an accident that subsists within a body, to be in a direction with respect to a body, such as Him being above the Throne, or being below it, or to its left, to its right, in front of it, or behind it. If Allah was in a direction with respect to a physical mass He would also be a physical mass. If He was a physical mass He would not possess dissimilarity [from the creation], and negating His absolute dissimilarity is impossible. These are some of the examples of likeness that are impossible with regards to the Divine Entity, and they are examples that follow corporeality.[82]

An accident is that which does not subsist within itself; rather, it needs an entity in which to subsist, such as the colour black, or white, or any other colour, and movement and stillness. The colour black, for example, does not exist on its own without an entity in which to subsist. Nay, it has no reality unless it subsists within an entity, such as in a black garment or a black stick and so on. The world is restricted to these two categories, and it is impossible for Allah to have a likeness to any of this. He is neither a substance nor an accident. (*F*)

[81] You should know that there are ten types of likeness:

1. That He is a body
2. That He is an accident subsisting within a body
3. That He is in a direction
4. That He has a direction unto Himself
5. That He indwells in a place
6. That He is subject to the passing of time
7. That contingencies subsist within Him
8. That He is qualified with smallness
9. That He is qualified with largeness
10. That He is described with motives in His actions and rulings.

These ten things are mentioned here in this order. (*F*)

[82] Allah is not to the right of the Throne, nor is He to the left of it, in front of it, behind it, above it, or under it. One must beware of what the laity believes, namely, that Allah is [physically] above the world. That said, the correct view regarding one who believes in a direction

It is impossible for Allah to have a direction in Himself, in that He has a right, left, above, below, front, or back. If He possessed such directions He would be a physical mass, and this is another example of likeness that is impossible with regards to the Divine Entity. This is an example that also follows from corporeality.[83]

NOTICE
You should know that a substance [*jirm*] is more specific [in its indication] than an essence. An essence is more general.

[for Allah] is that he has *not* disbelieved. This was stated by [al-ʿIzz] Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām. Al-Nawawī restricted this ruling with the condition that such a person [who believes that] be from the laity. (*B*)

In *al-Qawāʿid al-Kubrā*, al-ʿIzz said: "...especially the view of the one who believes in a direction [for Allah]; customarily no one is inherently guided to belief in an existing being that is neither moving nor still, and neither separate from the world nor connected to it, and neither inside of the world nor outside of it, No one is guided to that save by examining difficult, recondite proofs, which is why Allah has pardoned the laity regarding that."

It seems apparent that the restriction of this coming from the laity is from al-ʿIzz and that al-Nawawī only followed him in that. (*F*)

[83] The anthropomorphists among the Ḥanbalīs and those who followed them among the followers of Ibn Taymiyya all affirm two hands for Allah, the Exalted, and say that their meaning with respect to Allah is the same meaning as hands are with respect to the creation. They do not explicitly use the word "physical limb" or "part" because there is no mention of that [in the Divine texts] and for fear that some might imagine that it is possible for them [hands] to be separated from Allah's Entity. Far exalted is Allah above their vain desires. They claim that each hand has its own direction; and for certain, the only reason they say this is because they believe that the two hands are parts and appendages—even though they prohibit using the word "part" or "limb."

According to *Ahl al-Sunna*, this belief is false and it is not allowed to be affirmed for Allah, the Exalted. I once debated someone from their ilk who had taken the position of a Shaykh. He explicitly declared that Allah possesses a "portion" [*qadr*] and that according to him "portion" means size and limit. On the other hand, he refused to describe Allah using the word "size" because it is not a beautiful word, so with these types of people verbal expressions are paramount and not meanings, so contemplate this well and marvel! (*F*)

Every physical mass is an essence but not every essence is a physical mass. Some essences are physical mass, such as [the essences] of contingent beings.

Some essences, however, are not physical mass, such as Allah's Entity. A physical mass includes a composite body [*jism*] and an indivisible element [*al-jawhar al-fard*].

NOTICE

It is permissible to say that Allah, the Exalted, is an Entity [*Dhāt*], for it has been mentioned in a religious text in which the poetry of Khubayb was cited. He said:

I care not as long as I am killed a Muslim
And on what flank of mine I die for Allah
And such is for His Entity [*Dhāt*]
And if He wills, He shall bless even the joints of a torn trunk

The Prophet ﷺ heard this line of poetry and allowed it.[84] The proof in the poem is where he said: *And such is for His Entity* [*Dhāt*].

NOTICE

The reality of an accident is that it is something that does not subsist within itself; rather it subsists within a physical body. It is impossible for Allah, the Exalted, to be restricted to a place. The reality of "place" is a body in which another physical body subsides.[85]

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[84] This was narrated by Abū Hurayra in al-Bukhārī's collection with the wording:

I care not as long as I am killed a Muslim
And on what side of mine I die for Allah
And such is for His Entity [*Dhāt*]
And if He wills, He shall bless even the joints of a torn trunk

This was also narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* and Ibn Ḥibbān. I did not find any narration with the wording "*and on what flank...*," however, it has the same meaning as the word "side." (F)

[85] The meaning given for "place" here is only one of its linguistic usages. The word "place" is also used to denote a domain in which there is a

physical body and which is limited by the external limits of that body. This meaning is very close to the technical meaning. As for the actual technical meaning of place, it was stated by al-Bājūrī: "According to *Ahl al-Sunna*, place is an imagined void." I say: what he means is the imagined void that is occupied by a physical body and in which the bodies' dimensions penetrate. He called it "imagined" because it is not found alone except in the imagination after the human mind has demarked it and separated it from a physical body... The meaning of place that we have negated from Allah, the Exalted, in this text is the place that entails settlement [*istiqrār*] upon something. It is not permissible to say that Allah is settled upon the Throne or settled upon anything else with the meaning of spatial contact and sitting. This is what the anthropomorphists call *istiwā'* and attribute to the Salaf. They say that Allah, the Exalted, is settled upon the Throne with spatial contact, which is the same meaning as sitting! This belief is false and none believe it save the anthropomorphists and those who have revived their sect in this day and age. The anthropomorphists have spread this belief among both the laity and elect under the name of "the way of the Salaf," and this plot has deceived many a good person.

You might be amazed to learn that Ibn Taymiyya affirmed two things for Allah: [one] that He is sitting upon the Throne and settled upon it with spatial contact, saying, based upon that, that He is in a place (which is what we have negated above), and [two] that Allah has a place—which is the second meaning of place that means an imagined void, which is the exact meaning of boundary [*ḥayyiz*].

Ibn Taymiyya said that Allah, the Exalted, possesses a boundary for His Entity and a particular size, and that this size is called "*qadr*." He said that Allah, the Exalted, possesses a particular *qadr* and that He is all encompassing of the creation with His Entity; if one were to descend down a hole from one side of the world and come out on the other side—in whichever direction it was—that person, Ibn Taymiyya says, would find Allah! As such, according to Ibn Taymiyya's doctrine, if you were to turn to Allah from any direction of the directions in the world, or even the direction of your own self, you would find the Entity of Allah with the estimated stretch of distance from your direction to the edge of the world! Based upon this meaning that Ibn Taymiyya admitted to... Allah, the Exalted is the place of this world. Ibn Taymiyya mentioned these things in several of his books, such as his refutation of [al-Rāzī's] *Asās al-Taqdīs*, his *Majmū'a al-Rasā'il wal-Masā'il*, *Dar' Ta'āruḍ al-'Aql wal-Naql*, and others. His belief was also explicitly stated by some of his followers as well, such as the commentator of *al-'Aqīda al-Wāsiṭiyya*. Understand this well and be as amazed as you want. If you wish to understand how

That thing in which it subsides is a termed place. If Allah had a place He would be a physical body, and if He were a physical body He would not be absolutely dissimilar [from the creation]—and it is impossible to negate this absolute dissimilarity for Allah, the Exalted. Take note of the fact that the negation of a place also entails a negation of limits for Allah's Entity—as was textually stated by *Ahl al-Sunna.*[86]

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he said that, refer to our book *The Small Disclosure Regarding the Doctrine of Ibn Taymiyya.* In that book we disclosed the reality with lengthy quotes and ample commentary and mentioned some of the gross blasphemies he believed in. (*F*)

[86] A limit [*ḥadd*] is an outer extremity and edge of an entity from any particular direction. At this extremity there begins another entity—either assumed or imagined. This meaning is completely and absolutely negated from Allah, the Exalted; Allah's Entity does not possess limits and extremities, because that would entail that His Entity is a corporeal body. *Ahl al-Sunna* explicitly negated this from Him, the Exalted. Imam al-Ṭaḥāwī said: "He is transcendent beyond limits, ends, supports, components, or instruments. The six directions do not surround Him as they do created things." This is the consensus of *Ahl al-Sunna.* No one among them [*Ahl al-Sunna*] opposed this.

As for the innovators among the anthropomorphists, they ascribed limits to Allah, the Exalted. Some of them—such as al-Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā—said that Allah possesses a limit from the direction of the Throne only, and that He is not limited by the other directions! Ibn Taymiyya was not pleased with this view and instead he maintained that Allah is limited from the other directions as well—which means that He is limited from all six directions, left, right, and so on. He based this belief off of one of his principles that states it is not possible for an object [*jism*] to possess unending dimensions. He mentioned this in his refutation of *Asās al-Taqdīs.* Some ignorant folk might imagine that if we say that Allah's Entity is without a limit, we are forced by implication to believe in indwelling, union, or oneness of being. This is a proof of their own ignorance; we also negate indwelling, union, and oneness of being, while at the same time, we believe that Allah exists with an existence that befits His Majesty. It does not befit His Majesty that His Entity is limited. Our belief is a negation of limits, not an affirmation of union or similar matters. (*F*)

Temporality is also impossible for Allah; hence, it is impossible for Allah to be subject to the passage of time, for if that were so, He—in His Entity—would be similar to contingent beings,[87] not to mention that the passage of time occurs by means of physical bodies. It is impossible for His Exalted Entity to be described with contingent attributes, such as movement and stillness, because the emergence of a contingent attribute would entail that He is also described with contingency, and this is another type of similarity that is impossible for the attributes, and this follows directly from the premises.

NOTICE

The difference between an attribute and an accident is that an accident is more general than an attribute. We say that every accident is an attribute but not every attribute is an accident. Some attributes are accidents, such as the attributes of contingent beings, and some attributes are not accidents, such as the attributes of Allah.

It is impossible for His Exalted Entity to be described with smallness and greatness. Smallness connotes a paltriness of parts and greatness connotes a largeness of parts. Both of these are particular to parts, and Allah is exalted beyond that. He in His Entity would be similar to contingent beings were this the case, and that is impossible. This [i.e., smallness and largeness] is resultant from corporealism. However, the "greatness" that means an exalted status is necessary for Allah, as He said: ﴾*So the judgment is for Allah, the Great and the Mighty.*﴿ [al-Ghāfir: 12]. He is great in the sense that He possesses greatness and authority; not great in the sense of physical size, as claimed by the anthropomorphists.

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[87] In other words, it is impossible for Him to be subject to the movement of the constellations or the alteration of night and day. The well known view is that time is the movement of the constellations... Other views have been posited as well. The view of the verifying scholars is that it is one of the rational concepts—and this is what is correct. (*B*)

Some might not agree with his statement: "...and this is what is correct," so contemplate this well. (*F*)

The reason why it is impossible for Allah to be restricted to time and place is because both are contingent; nothing is restricted by them save that which is also contingent like them. But Allah, the Exalted, is Pre-eternal; His existence is before either time or place, therefore He is not restricted by them. For this reason it cannot be said that He is in a time or a place, lest it be imagined that He is limited by them. Yes, it *is* permissible to say that Allah exists before place and time and with them and after them. (*M*)

It is impossible for Allah, the Exalted to be described with motives in His actions or judgments. The word "motives" [*aghrāḍ*] is the plural of motive [*gharaḍ*] and it is the incentive[88] to look after benefits and repel harms. This is impossible with regards to His Divine Entity because He is in no need of obtaining benefits or repelling harms; He is Free of all needs [*al-Ghanī*] and independent from everything.[89]

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[88] A motive [*gharaḍ*] is an incentive that influences a particular action or judgment. It is also called a motivating cause and reason. An example of this may be explained in the following illustration: If you want to extract water from the ground you would dig until water comes out. Digging, therefore, is the action, and the extraction of water is the motive or the motivating factor that causes you to dig. It is impossible for Allah to be described with motives that influence Him to do a particular act—such as bringing so-and-so into existence—or influence any of His judgments, such as the command to prayer and prohibition of fornication. (*M*)

[89] You should know that although His actions and judgments are transcendent and exalted beyond motives, they still contain wisdom [*ḥikma*], even if it does not reach our rational minds. If His actions were without wisdom, they would be futile, and that is impossible for Him, the Exalted. The difference between motive and wisdom is that a motive is intended by a particular action or judgment, in that it is an incentive and influence for it, whereas wisdom is not like that. (*B*)

Wisdom is the *result* of an action or judgment and it is not a *motivator* for a particular thing. An example of this is riding and adornment; they are both the wisdom behind Allah creating horses, mules, and donkeys, as He, the Exalted, mentioned: ﴾*And horses, mules, and donkeys; in order for you to ride them and take adornment.*﴿ Wisdom is not a motivating cause because the One who performs the action or issues the judgment clearly knows the results beforehand. Furthermore, the person who does things for motives wishes to obtain his object of desire through his actions or judgments, and he does not know if his actions will result in that or not. Consider the one who digs into the earth to extract water; his motive and intent for digging is so that water comes up, yet he does not know if water will actually come up or not. Allah's beginningless knowledge encompasses His actions and judgments and their results; therefore, the results of His actions and judgments are not a motive for Him to do His actions. If this were not the case His actions would be qualified with motives, and He, the Sublime and Majestic, is transcendently above that as shall be explained soon. (*M*)

You should know that the governing particle of *lām* [to, for, in, order, so as, etc.] mentioned in the Qur'an in several places, such as His words ﴾*And I have not created mankind or Jinn except to worship Me* [*illā li-yaʿbudūni*]﴿ it is called the *lām* of outcome [*lām al-ʿaqiba*] and it is not called the *lām* of reason [*lām al-taʿlīl*]. The *lām* of outcome indicates that the purpose [for their creation] is to order them with worship; this does not indicate that their worship of Allah is the reason for their creation; instead, it shows that the obligation upon them to worship [Allah] is an outcome of them being created with their particular qualities. The worship observed by mankind and Jinn is not the motive for Allah's creation of them, for that would entail that Allah needs them to worship Him. This is false from the standpoint of both the rational faculty and the Divine texts. As for its falsehood from the standpoint of the rational faculty, we say that the one who is in need of something else in order to complete him is not intrinsically perfect in himself. Anyone like that does not deserve to be a god. As for its falsehood from the standpoint of the Divine texts, there are many narrations demonstrating that. Among them is the report in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that if all of mankind and Jinn were gathered in the heart of the most pious person among them, it would not would add anything to Allah, and that if all of mankind and Jinn were gathered in the heart of the most disbelieving person among them, it would not take anything away from Allah. Having said this, the meaning of the verse would be "I have not created mankind or Jinn except that the outcome of it is worship, or to order them with worship." Worship completes man and it does not complete Allah, the Creator of mankind and Jinn. (*F*)

Al-Qūnawī said in his gloss upon the exegesis of al-Bayḍāwī (18:230): "The *lām* is used metaphorically due to the relation between worship that is a result of their creation because it closely resembles how a sought-after goal results from an action universally."

He also said: "The upshot of this is that their ability to worship, joined with the fact that it is commanded of them, is akin to how a sought-after goal is the outcome of an action. Making worship the purpose of creation according to this interpretation is hyperbolic—in other words, it is an exaggeration regarding the cause for one being created in this manner for worship; therefore, worship is not a literal reason for the creation, it is metaphorical. Making worship the purpose of creation is

As this relates to His creation, it is not obligatory upon Him to observe their interests or to repel harms from them; for contrary to the belief of the *Mu'tazila*, it is not obligatory for Allah to look after what is for their benefit or best interests. No matter the case, motives for Him are impossible. Negation of motives does not entail foolishness or futility, because the foolish one is he who is ignorant of the end results of matters, and Allah has negated foolishness from Himself when He said: ❮*So do you consider that We created you in jest?*❯[al-Mu'minūn: 115] and: ❮*And We have not created the heavens and the earth in jest.*❯ [al-Anbiyā': 16]. So motives are another type of similarity that is impossible for the actions and judgments [of Allah] and this conclusion comes directly.

NOTICE

What is meant by actions here are the acts of bringing into existence and non-existence, honouring, abasing, bringing life and causing death, and enriching and impoverishing. What is meant here by judgments are the legal judgments in the Sacred Law, and they are: recommended, obligatory, unlawful, detested, and lawful. His actions and judgments are not for any motive; on the contrary, they are from His pure largesse and justice.

It is impossible for Him to *not* be Self-subsistent, such as there being a contingent or pre-eternal attribute subsisting in a locus or needing a determiner; it is impossible for Allah, the Exalted, to subsist within an Entity just as a quality subsists in one qualified—as is claimed by the Christians, the *Bāṭiniyya*, and others who have deviated from the straight path. The Christians believe that the Deity indwelled within 'Īsā ﵇, and the *Bāṭiniyya* —a deviant faction—believe that Allah indwells within the completed and perfected saint. All of this is explicit disbelief.

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metaphorical, and for that reason, the *lām* particle was used. In another verse, the Exalted said: ❮*So the family of Pharaoh picked him up* [*out of the river*], *with the outcome that he would* [soon] *be any enemy to them and a cause of sadness.*❯ Here, enmity and sadness were made the outcome of an action, which him being picked up out of the river, even thought that outcome was not sought after [by Pharaoh]. This may be likened to the sought-after goal, and this is why the *lām* particle was used metaphorically..."

If Allah were to indwell within something He would be an attribute of that thing; if He were an attribute of that thing it would not be correct to describe Him with qualitative or predicative attributes, because one quality does not subsist within another quality, and our Master (Allah), the Sublime and Majestic, must be described with both [qualitative and predicative attributes]. He is not an attribute; rather He is an Entity that does not resemble other entities. His attributes do not resemble other attributes. Just as indwelling is impossible, so is union, which is when two things become one. The *Bāṭiniyya* also have this belief regarding saints.

In *Iḍā'a* it states:

Do not lend your ear to the statement of the Christians
Or those who claim that He [Allah] is indwelling
That is just like the belief in union
A creed of the people of deviance and atheism
This danger is alluded to in the words
Of some of the notable Sufi folk
It is fitting that their special knowledge
Should be interpreted in light of the Divine texts

So in summary, the belief of indwelling and union is disbelief—nay, ignorance that it is disbelief is disbelief itself.

NOTICE

It is absolutely impossible for two things to become one, whether pertaining to the pre-eternal or contingencies. The proof for this [impossibility] is that, assuming that two things became one, if they remained as two separate beings there would be no indwelling because they are still two. If they were both made non-existent together, then that which exists in their place is an "other" and thus there was no indwelling. If one of the two was made non-existent, indwelling would be impossible because that which is non-existent is not an actual existent. Belief in indwelling is disbelief according to the unanimous agreement of the Muslims.

It is impossible for Allah, the Exalted to be in need of a determiner [*mukhaṣṣiṣ*],[90] for if Allah was in need of that He would be contingent, and contingency is impossible for Allah.

It is impossible for Him to *not* be One. It is necessary that Allah is One: not as a composite Entity, one possessing a likeness in his Entity or attributes, or having something in existence that has independent efficacy in any act.[91] It is impossible for any of the creation to have attributes like those of Allah, such as the power to create or the will to specify, or any of the remaining attributes. All of this is impossible because Allah has no partners in His attributes. This is the [meaning of] discrete quantity in the attributes, and this is impossible. In addition, it is impossible for Allah to have continuous quantity in His attributes. That is to say, it is necessary that His attributes are not [described] with multiplicity. He who says otherwise is proven incorrect because of the consensus [to the contrary]. Some have said that continuous quantity in His attributes does not negate Divine oneness; however, this is a mistake and contrary to consensus.

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[90] What is meant here by determiner is one who brings things into existence—a doer and an independent affecting agent. This means that Allah does not need, in either His Entity or attributes, a determiner to determine them. That would necessarily entail that His attributes are possible and emergent. In addition to this, it cannot be said that Allah Himself determines His Entity or attributes with a particular modality, for that would entail the same danger as the first.

You should know that Ibn Taymiyya affirmed this regarding Allah, the Exalted. He claimed that Allah acts within Himself; this means that according to him, Allah changes His states as He wills: moving, descending, ascending, sitting on the Throne, bringing about new attributes within His Entity such as anger, pleasure, letters, sounds, and other things. This is the extent of Ibn Taymiyya's extremism in anthropomorphism. (*F*)

[91] This is a refutation of the *Mu'tazilī* belief that the servant creates his own voluntary actions via a power that Allah has created within him. The correct position is that they are not disbelievers due of this [belief], because they did not make the "creative power" of the servant like the creative power of Allah, the Exalted. The scholars from the Trans-Oxus imputed them with disbelief and went so far as to declare the Zoroastrians better than them, because the Zoroastrians only affirmed one partner for Allah, whereas the *Mu'tazila* affirmed many partners. (*B*)

It is impossible for Allah to have a partner in His actions, in that others have actions like His. This is the discrete quantity in actions. If you know this, then you come to a realization that there is no efficacy in anything of the creation when it comes to customary means and other things. Nothing of the creation possesses independent effect, neither by their nature nor by any force that Allah deposited within them.[92] As for the continuous quantity, that is not negated because all actions are created by Allah, the Exalted.

In addition to this, neither the servants nor any other living things have independent effect in their actions. Their actions are two categories: voluntary and involuntary. Involuntary actions are actions that Allah creates within a living thing, actions that the living thing has no choice [to do], such as trembling. In the apparent (meaning what is witnessed) and the non-apparent

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[92] The conventional means do not possess independent efficacy in the things they cause; the fire does not possess independent effect in combustion, nor does food with respect to satiety or a knife with respect to cutting, and so on. There is no dispute regarding the disbelief of the one who believes that any of these things possess independent effect. If, however, a person believes that these things possess effect due to a power that Allah has placed within them, he is a corrupt innovator. There are two views regarding the disbelief of such an individual, and the most correct view is that he does not fall into disbelief. This is like the one who believes that the servant creates his own voluntary actions by power that Allah has deposited within him.

Whoever believes that nothing possesses efficacy and that the only possessor of independent effect is Allah, the Exalted, yet at the same time believes that there is an rational and *inherent* link between causes and effects—such as the observation that wherever there is fire there is combustion—then he is ignorant of the reality of the judgment and this might push him to disbelief because it leads to denial of the breaks in natural phenomena, such as the inimitable miracles of the Prophets—peace and blessings be upon them—and the resurrection of bodies.

No one is saved except he who believes that nothing possesses efficacy and that there is no inherent link between causes and their effects, by believing that it is valid and possible for there to be a cause with no subsequent effect. Allah is the One who gives success. (*B*) (meaning the reality),[93] such a person [who trembles] is compelled to do so. There is no difference of opinion that the Creator of these involuntary actions is Allah, the Exalted. Out of Allah's pure largesse He has not burdened one forced [to do something] with legal responsibility.

As for voluntary actions, they are the actions that Allah creates within a living being, such as a servant, and he [the servant] possesses choice and Allah creates ability along with it. When Allah wills to create a voluntary action[94] within a servant, such as standing, sitting, or walking, He, the Glorified and Exalted, causes it to come to the servant's mind and He places a means for its creation, which is the [servant's] choice of doing that action—which entails his will and inclination to do it. When [the servant] chooses it and directs himself to it, Allah creates it within him and creates the power along with it. It is an existing attribute that is linked to voluntary actions; it is connected and related to them without it possessing independent efficacy.[95] It is like other customary means and Allah creates *with* it and not *by* it. Its linkage to voluntary actions does not entail that it has independent efficacy in it, because an attribute could be linked [with something else] but without possessing independent efficacy. Knowledge, for instance, is an attribute that possesses linkage yet it has no independent efficacy in that to which it is linked.[96]

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[93] What is meant here by involuntary actions in which one has no choice, such as trembling, is that even if one wanted keep from trembling, he would still tremble. Trembling occurs against his will, so his will does not possess independent effect in stopping it. (*F*)

[94] Notice here that Allah's will follows from His knowledge that the servant wants to do that voluntary action. By His beginningless eternal knowledge Allah knows the servant's desire for that action. He therefore creates it by creating within the servant the will and the power needed for that will. (*F*)

[95] Nay, the connection between contingent power, contingent will, and the contingent action within the servant is only called "acquisition" [*kasb*] or "action," and not creation. Creation means to bring something from non-existence into existence, and that is only for Allah, the Exalted. (*F*)

[96] This means that if we say the power of the servant is linked with a voluntary action, it does not imply that the power brought the action

into being. Such a claim would only be a comparison between [it] and the power of Allah, the Exalted, and that—i.e., the comparison between Allah and the servants in anything—is known to be impermissible. Since attributing the act of creation and independent efficacy to the power of the servants necessitates resemblance [between Allah and the creation] and since we maintain that it [the servant's power] is linked to an action, its linkage must, therefore, be in a manner that does not suggest creation and independent efficacy. According to *Ahl al-Sunna*, this manner of affirmation is called acquisition [*kasb*].

It cannot be argued that the contrasting reality between the linkage of the servant's power and the linkage of Allah's power is against the rational faculty with the claim that the linkage of power must be one of independent effect. On the contrary, we say that the claim that all power must necessarily be one of independent effect only comes from a comparison between the power of the servants and the power of Allah, and this is false. The default rule is that there is to be no analogy or comparison [between Allah and the servants] and that there is no commonality between the two powers, which subsequently applies to the linkage of the two powers as well. This is similar to our belief in the contrast between the linkage of Allah's knowledge, which is linked with everything known, and the linkage of a contingent beings' knowledge. The knowledge of a contingent being is through acquisition, with a modality, through the imprint of an image in the self, or it could be self-evident or non self-evident, and other differences that show the contrast between the two types of knowledge. It is well know that it is impermissible to attribute any of these things to the knowledge of Allah, the Exalted. At the same time however, we use the word "knowledge" to express both what is in ourselves as well as the attribute that subsists with Allah, the Exalted. Even though we believe in the contrast between the two realities, we still use the same word for both of them. This is not far-fetched linguistically; the existence of Allah cannot be compared to the existence of anything else, yet we use the word "existence" for ourselves and for Allah, the Exalted. The same may be said for the word "remaining" [*baqā'*], which when used to describe Allah, it means endlessness. We are absolutely certain that all of these attributes of Allah are dissimilar to ours.

From all this, you realize that our argument regarding contingent power is nothing odd, and that the same is said regarding all of the other attributes. There is no doubt that the one who opposes this must admit to resemblance [between Allah and the creation]. This also demonstrates the falsehood of the sects who objected to the view of the esteemed Ash'arīs and Māturīdīs, that contingent power is through acquisition.

The linkage of contingent power to a voluntary action is called acquisition [*kasb*] and for its sake, a voluntary action is ascribed and attributed to a living being just as its parts, such as its head, hands, and feet, are ascribed to it, even though it is a creation of Allah alone.[97]

A voluntary action is ascribed to Allah by way of creation, and it is ascribed to the living being by way of acquisition. It is correct to ascribe one thing to two different doers from two different frames of reference. A rented house, for example, is ascribed to its owner from the viewpoint of actual ownership, and at the same time it is ascribed to the renter from the viewpoint of the one who takes benefit from it.

Even though evil is created by Allah—given that it exists—proper etiquette, on the other hand, dictates that nothing is ascribed to Allah, the Exalted, save that which is good. So good is ascribed to Allah and evil is ascribed to the ego—even if its actual creation is ascribed to Allah. This is because conventionally

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Their claim that this is unintelligible is contradictory to their own views regarding the other attributes, in which they state that Allah is completely dissimilar to contingencies. The only exception to this are the anthropomorphists among the Ḥanbalīs who ascribe themselves to the Salaf—and the Salaf are free from them. They believe in resemblance between the Creator and the creation in the realities of these matters, and they only distinguish them with particular shapes and modalities. They might not negate that the power of the servant is a creator, and they might—as they commonly do—attribute that back to the primordial nature [*fiṭra*] and self-evident knowledge. In their belief, they oppose all of the other sects and all of the people of intellect. Contemplate this well, for it will unravel many confusing matters and clarify the doctrine of *Ahl al-Sunna*. (*F*)

[97] Obviously, this is a comparison between the ascription of a head to the servant, and the ascription of voluntary actions to him. This is only valid if the ascription is universal, for we know that it cannot be said regarding the head that the servant's power is linked to it by way of acquisition. Put simply, just as it is not farfetched for a servant to be attributed with something he did not create—such as a head—likewise it is not inconceivable for a servant to be attributed with voluntary actions by way of acquisition and not creation: both are attributed to Allah by way of creation and not acquisition. (*F*)

speaking, the ascription of evil brings to mind its acquisition and pleasure with it and it is known that Allah is not pleased with evil.[98]

What we have mentioned here regarding voluntary actions, is the way of Imam Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī and the majority of *Ahl al-Sunna* were in agreement with him. It is the truth in which it is obligatory to believe and it is a must to leave off all other false beliefs.[99]

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[98] The reason why it is prohibited to ascribe evil to Allah, the Exalted, is because someone might suppose that this means He is evil. This is false, because one who is evil is one who acquired evil—not the one who created it. Acquisition of it is a description, whereas in reality, creation is an *action* and not an *attribute*—as we explained regarding the attributes of action. We stated that the phrase "attributes of action" is somewhat loose because in reality, actions are not attributes. Attributes subsist with the one described and actions do not subsist with Allah because they are contingent. For this reason we say that it is prohibited to ascribe evil to Allah, the Exalted, so as to prevent people from imagining that Allah is evil. Despite the falsehood of this, proper caution is more suitable, and the prohibition is for the sake of observing proper etiquette. In a classroom setting, however, it can be said that Allah creates both good and evil, and in a classroom setting, it can be explained how this does not necessitate that He, the Exalted, is evil.

You should also know that some scholars took the view—after thorough investigation—that evil has no real existence, because it is only the absence of something, which subsequently means that it is not created in the first place. Something created cannot be "nothingness." This view presents itself as an absolute way out of the well known problem regarding the question of evil: if Allah creates evil, does that mean He is evil? That being said, we have already explained above that the creator of evil is not called evil and that only the one who acquires evil is called evil. Regarding the question of evil, there is a good deal of detailed discussion regarding it in the more lengthy works. (*F*)

[99] These words above regarding the issue of acquisition were taken from al-Mārghanī. He said after that: "Based upon this, the living being, such as a servant, has nothing but an outward choice and the acquisition of voluntary actions. We say outward choice only, because inwardly he is compelled, because Allah, the Exalted, is the One who creates his choice just as He creates the action and the power that accompanies it. He is compelled, but in the image of one with choice, just like a pen in the hand of a writer. Allah has made legal responsibility, reward, and

punishment the results of outward choice and acquisition. Allah does with His creation as He wills. There is no one who can counter His judgment or counteract His decree. He is not asked about what He does and to Allah belongs the penetrating proof."

We have some comments to make on this passage, and for that reason, we choose not to include it in the main text. We do not agree with his statement that the servant is compelled inwardly, because being compelled [*jabr*] is when an action occurs against one's will. If we say that Allah only creates the voluntary action in the servant according to the created will of the servant—which is a result of Allah's knowledge as we explained above—then how can it be said that the servant is compelled internally and given a choice externally? This is incorrect. Just because Allah creates the servant's will, action, and power, does not necessitate in any way that the servant is compelled. On the contrary, that is choice itself, for it follows the will of the servant that Allah has eternally known. This point was mentioned by the verifying scholar, Imam al-Sa'd al-Taftazānī in his commentary on *al-'Aqā'id al-Nasafiyya*. He said: "Objection may be raised that his act of free choice is either necessary or impossible, because Allah's knowledge and will are linked either with the existence of the action, thereby making it necessary, or linked with its non-existence, thereby making it impossible, and this is inconsistent with free choice. To reply, we say this position is invalid, because necessity by choice verifies choice as a reality and is not inconsistent with it. Furthermore, this position is contradicted by the actions of the Creator, the Exalted, for His knowledge and will are linked with His action, so it follows that His action is necessary to Him."

This statement of his is very useful and subtle. The meaning of his last sentence is as follows: since it is known that His action is *not* necessary to Him, your objection is false. The expression: "The servant is compelled in the image of one with free choice" was explained by Shaykh 'Illīsh in his commentary on *al-Sanūsiyya al-Kubrā*. He said: "The servant is compelled internally and in his voluntary action, for it is not possible for him to leave it after the creation of desire, inclination, will, the resolve to act, and the power to carry it out. As for him being given free choice outwardly to either do or leave something, it is because outwardly he does it if he wills or leaves it if he wills. In reality however, he has no action, for all actions belong to Allah, the Sublime and Majestic, who is alone and without partner..."

This is how Shaykh 'Illīsh explained this expression, and it is good and subtle. In other words, we are able to conceive of a servant desiring something after having left off his action and after having had resolve, inclination, desire and so on; however, in that situation, we perceive

3.5.5 INABILITY TO AFFECT WHAT IS POSSIBLE

It is impossible for Allah to be unable to affect the possible, no matter what it may be. It is also impossible for Him to bring anything into existence that He detests and does not want to exist[100]—in other words, something against His will. It is also impossible for Him to bring something into existence through puzzlement, forgetfulness, causation,[101] or through nature.[102]

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that his action is necessary, because acting when there is power, motive, and will is necessary. This goes against the notion of will, the occurrence of which we conceptualized coming from him after it, so understand this well. (*F*)

[100] Detesting is in opposition to will and not in opposition to love, as is clear. In other words, nothing can exist without His will. It should not be said that He brings things into existence because of His love for them. You should contemplate this well, because some of the anthropomorphists explained it in other ways. Some of them claimed that the Ash'arīs say that because Allah brought disbelief into existence, and because nothing exists that He detests, then it follows that He brought it into existence with love for it. They claimed that the Ash'arīs say that Allah loves disbelief unrestrictedly! This is obviously false as you can see, because detesting is in opposition to will and not love, so take notice. (*F*)

[101] The word *ta'līl* is found in the words of many from *Ahl al-Sunna*, but their usage of the word was different from the usage of the philosophers. The intent [of the Sunni scholars] by the word is the rational, empirical, or legal correlation between two matters, so do not be deceived by the outward expressions. (*M*)

Ibn Taymiyya took advantage of the word "cause" found in the works of jurisprudence authored by some of *Ahl al-Sunna*. In their works they would say that the ratio legis [*'illa*] for the prohibition of alcohol is drunkenness. Ibn Taymiyya claimed that they contradicted themselves and invalidated their own principles. This claim of his is completely false, because *Ahl al-Sunna* mentioned that when they use the word *'illa* in the science of jurisprudence or legal theory [*uṣūl al-fiqh*], they mean that which signifies something else, what is a "notifyer" [*mu'arrif*], as is well known in legal theory. This is completely different from the "cause" mentioned in the words of the *Mu'tazila*. When they used the word "cause," they intended what possesses efficacy and independent effect. Ibn Taymiyya would often resort to this method of discourse when he argued with the Ash'arīs; he would build a straw-man argument and refute his opponents based on his interpretation of their words and

The reality of inability is to be incapable of bringing a contingency into existence or to bring it into non-existence. This is the contrary of omnipotence and omnipotence is necessary for Allah, the Exalted, and its opposite, inability, is impossible for Him.

If Allah were described with inability, that inability would be either pre-eternal or contingent. If the inability was pre-eternal, it would entail that it is unceasing because that which is pre-eternal cannot cease. So if this were the case, the Master, the Exalted and Blessed, would not be described with omnipotence because it is impossible to gather between two contraries [*ḍidayn*]. If He were not described with omnipotence the universe would not exist—and this is impossible, as proven by observation and direct knowledge. If Allah were described with contingent inability along with His omnipotence it would necessitate that two contraries are gathered together. If He were described with contingent inability that is without omnipotence it would necessitate that His omnipotence is contingent, for everything that is susceptible to non-existence is contingent. A contingent

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attribute to them things they never said. Contemplate this well and do not be deceived. All those who have been deceived by him are like this, such as al-Muʿallimī, al-Muqbilī, and al-Shawkānī and others, and this is well known to those who are well read. These individuals followed the tail coat of Ibn Taymiyya and parroted what he said without any verification on their part. They would appear as independent scholars, but how far were they from that? (*F*)

[102] According to those who believe in both, the difference between cause [*ʿilla*] and nature [*ṭabaʿ*] (even if both share in the fact that they lack will) is that bringing into being by way of causation does not depend upon the fulfilment of a condition or the removal of an impediment. Therefore, there is no conception of a hand that moves when there is an impediment preventing the movement of the ring that is on the hand. This is different from bringing into being by way of nature. An example of this nature is the combustion of fire: it depends on the fulfilment of a condition, which is physical contact, and it depends on the removal of an impediment, which is wetness. According to those who believe in both cause and nature, the one who acts [with them] can only do actions and not "leave off action" [*tark*]. Our Master, the Glorified and Exalted, is the only One who acts with free will and can both do something or leave it off. (*Ṭ*)

attribute entails the contingency of the One who is described with it, and that negates [the existence of] the world, which we know is impossible because it is observed.

It is impossible for Allah to bring anything of the world into existence that He detests and does not want to exist because that is the opposite of will [*irāda*]. Will is necessary for Allah and to detest is impossible for Him. What is meant here by detesting is the rational detesting that indicates a lack of will. The detesting that is one of the five legal categories of the Sacred Law does not negate this. That which is detested according to this [legal] meaning occurs by the will of Allah, the Exalted, for if He did not will it, it would not have happened; nothing takes place in His dominion that He does not will. At the same time, He did not order those [detested] things because, according to *Ahl al-Sunna*, there is no inherent link between the will and the command. Rather, there exists between the two generality and specification. Both will and command are illustrated in the example of Abū Bakr's faith: he was commanded with it and it was the will of Allah. The Divine will alone is illustrated in the example of Abū Jahl's disbelief and the disbelief of other rejecters. The command alone is illustrated in the example of their [the disbelievers'] faith, for they were commanded to have faith, but Allah did not will its occurrence because He knew that they had no desire for it.

It is impossible for Allah to be puzzled [*dhuhūl*]. Puzzlement is when something is forgotten after having been known. It is also impossible for Allah to be heedless when He brings things into existence. Here heedlessness means being completely unaware of something. That is to say, it is impossible for Allah to bring anything of this world into existence out of puzzlement or heedlessness.[103]

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[103] It has been said that puzzlement is more general than forgetfulness because forgetfulness is when something is no longer sensed even though it remains in the memory. Puzzlement, on the other hand, is when something is completely lost. Based upon this, *sahw* (absent-mindedness) is a synonym of heedlessness. This is taken from the lexicons, for it is said: "So and so was heedless of something, i.e., he neglected it and forgot about it..." Forgetfulness is more specific than puzzlement, because it is when something is neither sensed nor

It is impossible for Allah, the Exalted, to bring anything of the world into existence through causation [*taʿlīl*], in that His Divine Entity is a cause for the existence of the creation without will and omnipotence. Those who hold this belief are the "people of cause" among the philosophers. According to them, the reality of "cause" is that from which an action springs—as opposed to leaving off an action [*tark*]—without any prerequisite condition or removal of impediments. They said that an example of this in the visible world is the movement of a finger being the cause for the movement of a ring. They said that the movement of the finger entails the movement of the ring, and that without the movement of the finger, the ring will not move. This is their belief. As for *Ahl al-Sunna*, the truth of the matter is that the movement of the ring and the finger are both creations of Allah. They are both inseparable due to the creation of Allah, the Exalted; the movement of the finger is not a "creator" of the ring's movement, or vice versa. On the contrary, they are both outwardly inseparable. Some might go so far as to say that one of them is the means [*sabab*] for the other, and by that they intend the customary means, not an independent effect.

Ahl al-Sunna refuted the "people of cause" by saying to them: "If you claim that the Pre-eternal Divine Entity entails the eternality of the world—because, as you say, the cause must be accompanied with an effect without lag—and if you claim that a contingent needs a doer and that the doer is nothing but a cause, that entails infinite regress and a vicious circle, both of which are impossible."

It is impossible for Allah, the Exalted, to bring something of the world into existence through nature [*ṭabaʿ*]. According to them, the reality of innate nature is that from which an action springs—as opposed to leaving off an action—*with* the prerequisite of fulfilling a condition or removing an impediment.[104] They said

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remembered. The reason why puzzlement and heedlessness are negated from His will is because they go run counter to knowledge, and whatever runs counter to knowledge goes against will. Both of them, therefore, negate will since they negate knowledge. (*B*)

[104] The difference between causation and nature is that the former does not depend upon the fulfilment of a condition and the removal of an impediment, unlike the latter. (*B*)

that an example of this in the visible world is combustion and fire. Combustion [they said] is the innate nature of fire; however, it is preconditioned with obtaining something (which in this case would be contact) and the removal of a preventative barrier (which in this case would be wetness). In their argument they say that if a precondition that continues to remain is obtained, the world is brought into being without will, so they are not forced by implication to say that the world is eternal. *Ahl al-Sunna* responded to them by saying: "If you say that the preventative barrier is eternal, then that implies that it could never be non-existent because it is impossible for the pre-eternal to be non-existent, thus, the world could not exist. If you say that the preventative barrier is contingent, it would need a preventative barrier before it, and this entails infinite regress, which is impossible. According to their own view, a precondition can only be contingent, thus it would need a precondition before it, and another before it, and so on, which would entail infinite regress and a negation of the world, which is impossible. Thus, creation via the modes of material cause and innate nature is void, which in turn necessitates that Allah does actions with choice, omnipotence, and will.

The belief in material cause and innate nature is disbelief according to scholarly consensus. Their belief that combustion is the innate nature of fire is false because it is disbelief according to consensus; there is no doer other than Allah alone and He is the Doer and the One who chooses.

It is also impossible for Allah to be ignorant. This is the opposite of knowledge. Ignorance is two categories: Compound ignorance and simple ignorance. Compound ignorance is to conceptualize something other than the way it truly is. It is to be ignorant of something while at the same time being ignorant of one's own ignorance concerning it; hence it is composed of two types of ignorance. Simple ignorance is to be knowingly ignorant of something. The reality of simple ignorance is to lack knowledge of something that should be known. These two categories of ignorance are both impossible for Allah, the Exalted. It is also impossible for Allah to possess other akin to ignorance, such as doubt, conjecture, fancy, negligence, heedlessness, forgetfulness, self-evident knowledge, non self-evident knowledge, or acquired knowledge. According to the view of some scholars, acquired knowledge is a knowledge that was preceded by ignorance.

It is also impossible that His knowledge be described as certainty, because certainty is affirmed via evidence, and it is impossible that His knowledge is acquired through investigation or acquisition.

NOTICE

That which is known includes what is necessary, impossible, and possible.

NOTICE

This opposition between knowledge and compound ignorance is an opposition between two contraries. On the other hand, the opposition between knowledge and simple ignorance is from the realm of "lack of knowledge" and acquired [knowledge]. When Divine knowledge is affirmed, the reality of ignorance and acquired knowledge is negated. Divine knowledge is an actual [*wujūdī*] attribute.

It is impossible for Allah to die. This is the contrary of life.[105] It is also impossible for Him [to be described] with what is analogous to death, such as saying that His life is via a soul or spirit, or through eating, drinking, sleeping, resting, or any other quality of contingent beings.

NOTICE

There are two schools of thought concerning the reality of death. The first school states that death is an accident that comes after life. According to this school of thought, death is real and existing. The second school of thought states that death is the absence of life from something that is qualified by life. According to this school of thought, death is non-existent.

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[105] According to *Ahl al-Sunna*, death is an existing thing. According to the *Mu'tazila*, it is the absence of life from something that is qualified with it. Based on the view [of *Ahl al-Sunna*], the relation of opposition between it and life is the relation of contraries, and based on the view [of the *Mu'tazila*], the relation of opposition between it and life is the relation between privation and possession. (*B*)

It is impossible for Allah to be deaf. This is the contrary of hearing. The reality of deafness is to lack all hearing due to a defect preventing it.[106]

It is also impossible for Him to be described with what is analogous to deafness—such as Him hearing some sounds and not others—for His hearing to be through ears, auditory means, and so on. His hearing is linked to all of existence.[107]

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[106] According to *Ahl al-Sunna*, it [deafness] is an existing thing. According to the *Mu'tazila*, it is the absence of hearing from something qualified with hearing. (*B*)

[107] Imam al-Sanūsī said in *Sharḥ al-Ṣughrā*: "Regarding our statement that 'hearing and sight are linked to all that exists,' this means that His hearing and sight disclose all existing things, be they pre-eternal or contingent. His hearing is not like the hearing of the creation, which is usually related to sounds, and His sight is not like the sight of the creation, which usually only relates to physical bodies, colours, and substances. The rational proof that the linkage of His hearing is general is the fact that the linkage of both [hearing and sight] is existence. Were they both linked with only some existing things and not others, they would both be in need of a determiner, and would thus be contingent—but it is impossible for contingents to subsist with Allah, the Exalted. The upshot of this is that the affirmation of these two attributes is taken from the Sacred Law, and the fact that they are linked to all existing things is taken from rational proof."

What Imam al-Sanūsī meant above was that this issue calls for more investigation and explanation, and that it is not enough to rely merely upon what appears at first glance in either the rational sciences or the religious sciences. Some scholars opposed him in his view that these two attributes are linked with all existing things. One of them said that these two attributes are linked with that which is heard and seen, to which Imam al-Sanūsī responded with a lengthy rebuttal, and there occurred much correspondence between the two. This is a very detailed issue, so no matter what the case may be, it is not allowed for one to imagine that what is meant by "that which is heard" is that it applies only to sounds, because the relied upon position according to most of *Ahl al-Sunna* is that Allah's inner speech [*kalām nafsī*] can be heard, and that Allah hears it, and it is not composed of sounds or letters. In addition to this, it cannot be said about things seen that they are colours only, because Allah sees Himself and He is not a colour nor does He possess a colour. It is a must that the intelligent person keeps these matters in mind because they will shed light on the words of Imam al-Sanūsī. It is also

It is impossible for Him to be blind. This is the contrary of sight. The reality of blindness is to lack all sight due to a defect preventing it.[108]

It is also impossible for Him to be described with what is analogous to blindness, such as [Him possessing] eyeballs, eyelids, pupils, and the like.

It is impossible for Him to be dumb. This is the contrary of speech. The reality of dumbness is to lack speech in entirety due to a defect preventing it.[109] It is also impossible for Him to be described with what is analogous to dumbness, such as His speech being composed of letters, sounds, and other contingent attributes.

As for the impossibility of contraries and things that negate the predicative attributes, it is obviously clear and it becomes even clearer after learning the impossibility of contraries for the qualitative attributes mentioned above.

3.6 What is Possible for Allah, the Exalted

It is possible for Allah to either do or leave every possible thing.[110] It is permissible for Him to do or leave off every possible thing

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important that one not rush to objections before gaining a thorough understanding of this, since it is a finely detailed and precise theological point. We have a research that affirms this; however, the summary is not suitable for reproducing it here. (*F*)

[108] According to *Ahl al-Sunna*, it is an existing thing that is the opposite of sight. According to the *Mu'tazila*, it is the absence of sight from something qualified with sight. (*B*)

[109] According to *Ahl al-Sunna*, it [dumbness] is an existing thing that is the opposite of speech. According to the *Mu'tazila*, it is the absence of speech from something qualified with speech. (*B*)

[110] What is possible for Him, the Exalted, is restricted to what the author mentioned here. (*B*)

According to the scholars of this science, "possible" is defined as everything whose existence and non-existence is considered equal. It is also called "permissible." For Allah to "do" means for Him to bring it into existence, and for Him to "leave" means for Him to keep it in non-existence. It is rationally permissible for Allah to either do or leave a possible thing. Rationally, there is nothing that obligates Him do anything of it. Rationally, it is not impossible for Him to leave off anything of it. He does as He wills and leaves things off as He wills;

and it is not permissible for Him to do every possible thing all at once, because there is no end to contingent possibilities; everything the rational mind can conceive as possible *is* possible. If all possibilities were done at once it would lead to an unending void, and that is impossible.[111]

NOTICE

Included in the possible is the sending of the Messengers عليهم السلام. It is neither obligatory, contrary to the [view of the] *Muʿtazila*, nor is it impossible, contrary to the [view of the] Brahmins and *Sumaniyya*,[112] nor is it acquired, contrary to the [view of the] philosophers, nor is it intrinsic, contrary to the [view of the] *Karrāmiyya*. The Brahmans and the philosophers are misguided and the *Muʿtazila* and *Karrāmiyya* are innovators. The belief of *Ahl al-Sunna* is that prophecy and messengership are both bounties from Allah, the Exalted.

Included in that which is possible is the reward given to the obedient and the punishment allotted to the disobedient.[113]

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whatever Allah wills shall come to be and whatever He does not will shall not come to be. All of His actions, Exalted is He, are called *matters*. He said: ﴾*Every day He is bringing about a matter.*﴿ This means that at all times, He—the Lord, the Exalted—is bringing about matters according to His decree and beginningless will: bringing things into existence, bringing things out of existence; honouring, abasing; enriching, impoverishing; giving to a petitioner and responding to a supplicant, and other matters of His, the Glorified and Exalted. (*M*)

[111] In addition to this, for Him to bring all possibilities into being at once would lead to a voiding of His omnipotence, which means that He would be unable to bring another possibility into being because He already brought it into being. Contemplate this well. (*F*)

[112] A group of Buddhists in eastern Persia and Iraq. Their name derives from the Sanskrit whence also comes the Greek *Samanaioi*, which was used by later Greek historians to describe Buddhists. Imam ʿAbdullāh al-Bayḍāwī says in *Ṭawāliʿ al-Anwār*: "[They are] an idol worshipping folk who believe in the transmigration of souls, and who deny absolutely [logical reasoning]..."—Tr.

[113] Some possible things might enter into the realm of the necessary because of the Sacred Law informing us that they will occur. These are called *contingently necessary* or *necessary for other than itself* [*wājib li-ghayrihi*]. Some possible things might enter into the realm of the

In addition to this, [it is also possible] to see Allah, the Exalted. The believers shall see Him without there being a direction, "face to face" encounter, place, or any other conventional means. Just as they [the believers] knew Him as exaltedly transcendent, so too they shall see Him in the same way. The beatific Divine vision is [rationally] possible and shall take place in the Hereafter for the believers.

As for seeing Him in the life of this world, it is rationally possible, but according to the Sacred Law, it cannot occur because of the Hadith: "You shall not see your Lord until you die."[114]

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impossible because of the Sacred Law informing us that they will not occur. These are called *contingently impossible* or *impossible for other than itself* [*mustaḥīl li-ghayrihi*]. An example of the former is the obedient person entering Paradise, and an example of the latter is the disbeliever entering Paradise. Both of these are rationally possible in and of themselves, yet the former is a legal necessity and the latter is a legal impossibility. (*M*)

[114] This was narrated by al-Nasā'ī in his *Sunan al-Kubrā* from 'Ubāda b. al-Ṣāmit from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who said: "I have spoken to you about the False Messiah [*al-Dajjāl*] for fear that you will not know who he is. He is short in stature, with curly hair. He is blind in his right eye and it is wide and protruding. If his affair confuses you, then know that you shall not see your Lord until you die." This was also narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *Musnad al-Shāmiyīn* from 'Ubāda b. al-Ṣāmit from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who said: "I have spoken to you about the False Messiah [*al-Dajjāl*] for fear that you will not know who he is. He is blind in one eye and it is wide and protruding. You should know that Allah, the Sublime and Majestic, is not one eyed, and that you shall not see your Lord until you die."

A certain foolish person inferred from this Hadith that Allah possesses two eyes, and that this means the same thing as when it is said that a person possesses two eyes. Although he refrained from using the words "limb," "appendage," or "part," this is the meaning that he affirmed and falsely attributed to the Salaf and *Ahl al-Sunna*. But this is pure unadulterated anthropomorphism. The fact that he did not explicitly use the words "part" and "limb" does not save him from being an anthropomorphist. Our judgment upon him that he is an anthropomorphist is based upon the meanings that he affirmed for Allah, the Exalted, and not the words themselves. Notice also that there is no mention of any of this in the report, yet this person inferred it by

According to the relied upon view of the investigating scholars,[115] the beatific vision has not occurred for anyone in the life of this world. All of this is rationally possible; however, the Sacred Law has informed us that it shall occur, so faith in it is obligatory.

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way of divergent meaning [*mafhūm al-mukhālafa*], which is weak. There is a difference of opinion regarding its acceptability in juridical matters, so how could this person take it as a fundamental principle in matters of doctrine? In addition to this, the concept of divergent meaning implies a resemblance between the two divergent things, which, in the case of this report, implies a resemblance between Allah and His creation! According to us this is false. This report is nothing more than a negation of deficiency from Allah, the Exalted, and brings attention to the fact that blindness is a flaw that does not befit Him. It does not imply the affirmation of two physical eyes, because the negation of being blind in one eye [*aʿwar*] is more general than Him possessing two eyes, or more, or less, or no eyes at all.

Perhaps this report indicates that the majority of the Dajjāl's followers in the last days will be the anthropomorphists who believe that Allah is in the form of a man. These are the only kind of people who could go so astray as to actually believe that the Dajjāl is the god they worship —especially after he manifests breaks in natural phenomena by the permission of Allah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ informed the Companions—in a manner commensurate with their intellects—that the Dajjāl is blind in one eye and that it is not fitting for Allah to be blind in one eye—even if He was in the form of a man as they claim. If we were to concede to the anthropomorphists' argument, this report would be a proof against them, for if it really means that Allah, the Exalted, possesses two eyes, then it must also mean that Allah is no different in shape from the Dajjāl, except that the Dajjāl is blind in one eye [and that Allah is not]. If this is impossible, then the opponent must concede that the report is only a negation of deficiency from Allah, the Exalted, and not, as they claim, an affirmation of two eyes. Within this Hadith there is a great warning from resemblance and anthropomorphism, as is obvious, and there are other benefits found within it, but this is not the proper place to mention them. (*F*)

[115] Some have debated and claimed that it happened with the Prophet ﷺ, although it is a weak view and the difference regarding it is minute. (*F*)

Looking after what is of benefit and most advantageous [*al-ṣalāḥ wal-aṣlaḥ*][116] is also included in the possible, contrary to the belief of the *Mu'tazila* who stated that it is obligatory [for Allah] to look after benefits and what is most advantageous. What is meant here by benefit is the opposite of corruption, and that which is most advantageous means the opposite [elative] of benefit.

You should know that bringing things into existence and non-existence and other possible actions are called attributes of action.[117]

The attributes of action express effective links: a linkage of action to Divine omnipotence, such a creating so-and-so by action, causing so-and-so to die by action, and so on. All of these things are contingent because they are possible, and everything that is possible is contingent. The attributes of action are contingent and are not from the attributes that subsist within the

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[116] According to the *Mu'tazila*, what is meant by benefit and best interest is its relation to the individual and not as a whole. (*F*)

[117] According to the esteemed Māturīdīs, these things are expressed as the active attribute of *takwīn*. To be more precise [according to them], the attribute of creating is the attribute from which these actions are issued—and it is not the same as the actions themselves. According to them, omnipotence is linked to the possibility of the existence of that which is decreed, and the attribute of creating [*takwīn*] is linked to the existence of that which is decreed and is the effecting agent of it. This was stated by Abū 'Adhba in *al-Rawḍa al-Bahiyya*. Al-Sa'd [al-Taftazānī] said in his commentary on *al-'Aqā'id* [*al-Nasafiyya*]: "Creating is a real attribute that is the basis for the relationship which is the bringing of the non-existent out from non-existence into existence, but not the relationship itself." From this we understand that, according to them [the Māturīdīs], the action is not pre-eternal, but rather the attribute by which the action occurs. According to them, the attributes of action are pre-eternal attributes from which the contingent actions are issued. The relied upon position [of the Māturīdīs] is the affirmation of the attribute of creating [*takwīn*], which is an attribute of action according to the meaning mentioned above. As for the view of the Ash'arīs, their verified view is mentioned in the main text, namely that the actions are linkages to the attribute of omnipotence, and because they come from an attribute, they call them attributes of action—this is the view of the verifying scholars. (*F*)

Divine Entity, lest they entail the indwelling of contingencies within His Entity, which is impossible. The actions have only been counted as His attributes because they are from His Divine omnipotence; hence, they are an effect of it. And because they are possible they do not subsist within His Entity. That which is possible does not subsist within His Exalted Entity.

[Another reason for this] is because the attributes that subsist within His Entity do not have an actual presence outside the human mind, whereas this is not the case with the attributes of action, for they are ascriptions and linkages between the Divine omnipotence and that which is acted upon. Ascriptions are relative and have no outward existence. For this reason, the word "contingency" that means "coming into being after non-being" is not used for the attributes of action. The word "contingency" is used for them [the attributes of action] with the meaning of renewal, for there is no doubt that they are constantly renewed.[118]

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[118] This passage was taken from al-Mārghanī's commentary. Know, that in some of his works, Ibn Taymiyya attempted to make it seem that the esteemed Māturīdīs believed that contingent attributes subsist with Allah and that actions are pre-eternal, because they stated that "The attribute by which the action [occurs] is pre-eternal and not the actions." He sought to explain their words regarding the attribute of creation [*takwīn*]—which is what is meant by attribute of action as we explained above. Ibn Taymiyya claimed that in their view, the affirmation of this attribute implies that contingencies subsist with Allah, the Exalted. Ibn Taymiyya only sought to aid his own school of thought, which states that contingencies subsist with the Entity of Allah, the Exalted. He also said that Allah's actions subsist within His Entity. This is *not* the view of the Māturīdīs. This is the manner in which Ibn Taymiyya would explain his opponents' position. He would explain it as he wished, not as they wished, and then he would use it to solidify his anthropomorphic school of thought. The one who is ignorant of the real view of the folk [the Māturīdīs] is then deceived and misled by his statements and claims. (*F*)

CHAPTER IV

4.0 THE RATIONAL PROOFS

You should know that what we presented was a clarification of the three categories [of rational judgment]: what is necessary, what is impossible, and what is possible for Allah, the Exalted, but without any mention of proofs. If someone accepts these things and believes in them he is a believer although he is still a conformist [*muqallid*]. We have already mentioned the difference of opinion regarding the ruling on the conformist, so in order to avoid the difference of opinion we shall mention the rational proofs for everything mentioned.

4.1 THE RATIONAL PROOF FOR ALLAH'S EXISTENCE

The rational proof for Allah's existence[119] is the contingency of the world. What is meant here by contingency is existence after non-existence. What is meant here by the world is every existing thing besides Allah, the Exalted. Alternatively it may be said that the world's coming from non-existence into existence is a proof for Allah's existence, because in that case the world is contingent,[120] i.e., it is made, and everything that is made must

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[119] Some scholars have said that it is not far-fetched for knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, to originate in a servant by way of inspiration [*ilhām*]. Despite that, however, it is not allowed for one to say that knowledge of Him, the Exalted, occurs in all servants by way of inspiration. In most cases, knowledge of Allah comes through investigation. In other words, one must look into the matter; that path might be long or short depending on the clarity within the soul of the one investigating. You should also know that knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, is a type of science, and it cannot be said to originate within a person through his primordial nature [*fiṭra*], in the sense that it exists within a person from his birth. That claim would mean that some sciences exist from birth, which is clearly false because it contradicts the words of the Exalted: ﴾*Allah took you out of your mother's wombs not knowing anything. And He made for you hearing, sight, and hearts so that perhaps you may show thanks.*﴿ This is an explicit text stating that when we come out from the wombs of our mothers we know nothing at all, including knowledge of Allah's existence. On the other hand, if someone intended that faith in Allah's existence agrees with the primordial nature and disposition and its pursuit of perfection, they would be correct. When someone is born, they are receptive to learning, and there is no type of knowledge that is innately acquired. Learning takes place only by the means that Allah mentioned in the same verse above: hearing, sight, and hearts.

This topic has a level of detail that is not suitable for this book. The majority of the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna* have said that knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, is usually acquired from investigation and acquisition. It is not farfetched for some to obtain it as self-evident knowledge, as we have mentioned. The crass anthropomorphists claimed that knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, is *only* through the primordial nature. Their intent was not to describe the reality of man as it is; instead, their intention was to oppose the people of truth in their methods of proof in establishing Allah's existence. That is because all of these methods demolish their anthropomorphic beliefs. These are the same folk who seek to dissuade people of intellect and rational thought. It is as if they believe that the people will fall into disbelief if they use the minds Allah created within them! In His Mighty Book, Allah informed us that the intellect leads people to the truth and guidance, so these folk have opposed the texts within the Qur'an in order to aid their sect! This is the state of the innovators, and with Allah is all success. (*F*)

[120] You should know that the syllogistic structure of this rational argument is as follows:

[p 1]: The world is contingent
[p 2]: Every contingent must have an originator
[c]: Therefore the world has an originator, and He is Allah, the One whose existence is necessary.

The One who originates the world must be "other" than the world. And since the world is contingently possible, it is a must that Allah is One whose existence is necessary. If He too was contingent, He would be in need of someone to originate Him. Know that the first premise, i.e., that the world is contingent, requires investigation and it is not self-evident. It calls for rational proof to establish it. The second premise, i.e., that every contingent must have an originator, is close to being self-evident and it can be claimed as such since proving it is easy. The only thing that requires thought is the first premise, and it has been the focal point of the scholars. *Ahl al-Sunna* and the theologians have established strong proofs for it mentioned in the more lengthy works of theology. (*F*) have a maker. This Maker is the One whom the Prophets called Allah.

If the world was not contingent and it originated itself—in other words, if its existence was preponderant over its non-existence without an external cause—then one of two things that are equal in the rational mind would be preponderant over the other without an external cause, and this is impossible because it is a gathering between two contradictories [*naqīḍayn*].[121]

NOTICE

What is meant by "two things" is existence and non-existence; in other words, a specific point in time as opposed to any other points in time; a specific direction as opposed to other directions; a specific size as opposed to any other size; a specific attribute as opposed to any other attribute; and a specific place as opposed to any other place. All of these six things are in contradistinction to another six. When applied to a substance, all of these six things with respect to the other [possibilities concerning them] are inherently equal, so it is impossible for one of them to be preponderant over the others, for that would entail a gathering between two contradictories. This implies by necessity that the world has a preponderating reason: a doer who brought it into existence from non-existence. In addition to this, all of these [*mutaqābilāt*] assume a doer who acts with choice, and there is no doer other than Allah.

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[121] This means that the argument that a contingent originated itself without an originator leads to the gathering of two contradictories or contraries, depending on how you frame it. It leads to [the claim] that [the proverbial scale] is both in equality and preponderance at the same time. Looking at the world, [we see that] it is contingent, which therefore means that it is contingently possible [*mumkin*]. That which is possible can be equally existent or non-existent [because it is possible]. So if it is argued that this contingently possible world originated itself, [we retort that] "existence" entails the preponderance [of the proverbial scale] of existence over non-existence, which further entails that it [the world] in itself gathered the equality of existence and non-existence, and the preponderance of existence over non-existence, and this is known to be false. (*F*)

Know that "possibility" is affirmed for the world before its existence, so it cannot serve as a universal proof for the existence of Allah, the Exalted. On the contrary, the existence of something that is possible is a proof for the necessity of a preponderating cause [*murajjiḥ*]. Inferring evidence from the existence of the world is stronger if we establish that it must be contingent and that it cannot possibly be eternal. This establishes the necessity of One whose existence is necessary [*wājib al-wujūd*], and one of the unique qualities of the One whose existence is necessary is pre-eternality. So possibility alone is a proof that something possible is in need, and when one investigates the matter he will see that the existence of something possible is a proof for Allah's existence. (*F*)

Through investigation and observation, [we see that] the world is divided into substances [*ajrām*] and accidents [*a'rāḍ*]. Substances are things that subsist within themselves, such as physical bodies. Accidents are things that subsist within substances, such as movement, stillness, colours, and other modalities. The way in which the contingency of the world can be rationally proven is by rationally proving the contingency of these two things [substances and accidents]. This is how we prove the contingency of the world, because there is nothing other than these two.

The rational proof that substances are contingent is that every substance is linked with contingent and ever-renewing accidents such as movement, stillness, gathering, and separation. These four accidents are called the "four things" [*akwān*], and a substance cannot be free from any of them. A substance is either moving or still[122] or gathered or dispersed. Other accidents include tastes, odours, colours, and so on. Accidents are contingent, and the proof [of their contingency] is their change—

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[122] The reason why the scholars speak about movement and stillness when they seek to prove the contingency of the world is because accidents usually refer back to them. (*B*)

Al-Bājūrī said: "The reason why movement and stillness are mentioned is because the inseparable link between them and substances is self-evident for every rational person. That being said, there is some question about them being considered accidents. "Accidents" is the plural of accident, which is particular to an existing thing, such as blackness and whiteness, whereas this is not the case here [with movement and stillness]. Movement is the displacement of a substance from one boundary to another. Stillness is the opposite of that..."(*B*) as shall soon be discussed. The substance that is linked with it is also contingent due to its link to it.[123]

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[123] The premise that whatever is linked to a contingent is itself contingent is an extremely strong proof. It has been established via observation and rational thought that substances are linked with accidents, and it has been established that accidents are contingent. So in other words, every accident has a beginning and a first that did not exist prior to it. Since it is impossible for a substance to exist without accidents, it is almost as if its own existence is conditioned upon the existence of accidents. And since accidents are contingent, it follows, therefore, that the existence of substances is conditioned upon something contingent. Anything that has its existence preconditioned on the existence of something that is itself contingent must too be contingent. With this we can establish the contingency of substances.

Know that Ibn Taymiyya attempted to cast doubt on this premise. He claimed that there was no evidence for it and that it is not a strong premise. As you see here, this premise is in fact strong and is supported with evidence. When Ibn Taymiyya cast doubt on this, it was not out of pure objective investigation on his part. He was not looking at the issue itself; rather, he was looking at what it entailed, namely the negation of contingents subsisting with Allah, the Exalted, which is the view of the esteemed Ash'arīs—and indeed all of the other Islamic sects, with the exception of the anthropomorphists, which includes Ibn Taymiyya. When he noticed the implication of this premise, he strove to contradict it, although all he brought against it was weak. The fact of the matter is he did not bring anything more than the claim that this premise is not mentioned in the Book or the Sunna, and he was unable to prove that it was contradictory to the intellect. *Ahl al-Sunna* refuted him and established that this premise is proven by the Book and the Sunna, and that Allah is exaltedly transcendent from having contingents subsist with Him.

Ibn Taymiyya, on the other hand, was among those who held the belief that contingents subsist with Allah. According to his belief, He [Allah] moves and displaces Himself from one place to another. According to his belief, *contingent* will [*irāda*] subsists with Him [Allah] when He wills to create a new creation; sounds and letters—that he claimed are His speech—subsist with Him and are two of His attributes subsisting with His Entity; contingent anger subsists with Him when He takes notice of the disbelievers and their deeds; and contingent retribution and pleasure subsist with Him, as well as other contingents. All of this stands in stark opposition to the textually stated position of *Ahl al-Sunna*, and is against the doctrine of Islam. There is no rational or legal proof

NOTICE

What is meant here by movement is the displacement of a substance from one boundary to another. What is meant here by stillness is for a substance to remain in one boundary. What is meant by gathering is for two indivisible substances [*jawharayn*] to gather in such a way that there is no third. And separation is the opposite of that.

The rational proof for the contingency of the world is that whatever is linked to a contingent is itself contingent. The details of this argument as it pertains to the contingency of substances[124] are as follows: Were substances eternal, it would entail that they are linked with contingent accidents, and it is impossible for an eternal to be linked with a contingent, hence it follows that substances are contingent.

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establishing such a belief. The doctrine of contingents subsisting [with the Divine] is one of the reasons for which the scholars of Islam declared Ibn Taymiyya an innovator. So, dear Muslim, beware of these corrupt beliefs. (*F*)

[124] You should know that the proof for the contingency of substances depends on another affirmation, namely the affirmation of accidents and that substances and accidents are linked, and the invalidation of the argument of contingencies without beginning [*ḥawādith la awwal lahā*]. The opponent might object and say: "We do not admit that there is something additional to substances." But we invalidate his objection by observation: there is no one of sound mind save that he senses within himself that his being possesses something additional to it. The opponent can then say: "We concede to that; however, we do not admit to a link between the two [the being and the 'other']." We invalidate his objection by observation of the fact that there is no separation [between substances and accidents]. The opponent can then say: "We concede to that; however, we do not admit that it proves the contingency of substances, for it is possible that it is eternal and that this "extra" is a contingent without a first. There is no movement except that there is a proceeding movement before it, and so on—so individually, it is contingent, and as a genus, it is eternal." What the opponent means is that the genus of movement is eternal, whereas the individual movement is contingent. We are able to invalidate this in many ways. Among them: There is no existence of a genus except as contained with its individual class or part. If the individual part is contingent, then it follows that the genus is as well, and this invalidates the claim of contingencies without a first. (*B*)

The rational proof for the contingency of accidents[125] is our observation of their change from non-existence to existence and their change from existence to non-existence. Any [accident] we have not observed [undergoing such change] is still disposed to it.[126] This may be compared to the first because both are equal in that they share in the basis of substance, so whatever is true for one is true for the other.

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[125] The rational proof for the contingency of accidents is conditioned upon the invalidation of the view that an accident can subsist within itself, that it can displace itself to something else, its concealment [*kumūn*], and that something eternal can cease to exist. The opponent might deny that an accident can change from non-existence to existence and vice versa. The opponent could say, for instance, that movement after stillness was not non-existent and then came into existence, and that rather, it existed before that. In response we ask him: At that time, was it subsisting within itself or did it displace itself from one locus to another, or did it conceal itself in its locus? If he claims that it was subsisting within itself, that implies that an accident is self-subsistent, which is false. If he claims that it displaced itself from one locus to another, that implies the same thing, because it entails that an accident subsisted within itself during the moment of its displacement. If he claims that it concealed itself in its locus, then that implies the gathering of two contraries, which is false. After explaining this he might say: "We submit to that; however, we do not submit that it proves its contingency, for it might be eternal and change from non-existence to existence and vice versa." To that we reply that something eternal cannot cease to exist. (*B*)

[126] It can be said that of the accidents we observe in the world, we see the contingency of some, such as the swaying of trees and the like. Other accidents we see in constant movement, such as the movement of the sun and the moon. Other accidents we see in constant stillness, such as the stillness of the mountains. The first category is observably contingent and the second and third categories are contingent based upon their analogy with the first, with the common link between them being corporeality [*jismiyya*]. In other words, all three are bodies and substances. All substances take the same ruling—what is permissible for one is permissible for all. Since it is permissible that some possess movement and stillness, we know by unequivocal analogy that it is permissible for things we have not seen changing, such as the last two categories. If it is established as permissible for that which is not perceived by our senses, it follows that it is contingent. Contemplate this well. (*F*)

NOTICE

This rational argument is completed if we say that an accident remains for two instances of time. If, however, we say that it does not, then all accidents change with coming into being [*ḥuṣūl*] and not receptivity. The syllogism of this argument is as follows:

P1. If accidents were eternal they would not change because it is impossible for the eternal to change.
P2. But it is impossible to negate change from accidents because their change is observable.
[C.: Therefore, accidents are not eternal.]

You should know that there are seven foundations upon which the rational proof for the world's contingency is built:

[1] Affirming something additional to a substance: an accident
[2] Invalidating the view that it is self-subsistent
[3] Invalidating the view that it can displace itself
[4] Invalidating the view of its manifestation or concealment
[5] Establishing that it is impossible for something eternal to cease in its existence
[6] Affirming that substances are inseparable from this addition [the accident]
[7] Establishing the impossibility of contingencies without a first [*ḥawādith lā awwal lahā*][127]

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[127] This is also called the infinite regress of contingencies in eternity [*tasalsul al-ḥawādith fī al-qidam*]. What it means is for one thing after another to go back to the past without end in eternity. It would be akin to someone imagining that Zayd originated ʿAmr and that ʿAmr originated Khālid, and that Khālid originated Bakr, and so on without end. Infinite regress is false because it entails the existence of contingencies without a first. This is false because every contingent has been rationally proven to have a beginning. (*M*)

4.1.1 AFFIRMING SOMETHING ADDITIONAL TO A SUBSTANCE: AN ACCIDENT

This is to affirm something additional to a substance with which the substance is described, such as movement, stillness, and the like. This is self-evident and in no need of proof. There is not a single intelligent person except that he senses additional attributes within himself.

4.1.2 INVALIDATING THE VIEW THAT IT IS SELF-SUBSISTENT, AND INVALIDATING THE VIEW THAT IT CAN DISPLACE ITSELF [2 AND 3]

The proof for the invalidity of these two views is the following: If an accident subsisted within itself or displaced itself, it would imply by necessity that the reality of an accident has been altered [*qalb al-ḥaqā'iq*]. For example, movement is when a substance displaces itself from one boundary to another. If movement was self-subsistent or if it displaced itself, this reality would be altered and movement would be a substance, and that is false.

4.1.3 INVALIDATING THE VIEW OF ITS MANIFESTATION AND CONCEALMENT

We invalidate this by saying that this, by necessity, leads to the gathering of two contraries in one locus.

4.1.4 ESTABLISHING THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR SOMETHING ETERNAL TO CEASE IN ITS EXISTENCE

We establish this impossibility by stating the following: If something eternal ceased to exist, its existence would be only contingently possible, and the contingently possible can only be originated, which would mean that the eternal is originated, and this is a contradiction.

4.1.5 AFFIRMING THAT SUBSTANCES ARE INSEPARABLE FROM THIS ADDITION [THE ACCIDENT]

This is self-evident because it cannot be conceived that a substance can be without the state of either stillness or movement.

4.1.6 ESTABLISHING THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CONTINGENCIES WITHOUT A FIRST [*ḤAWĀDITH LĀ AWWAL LAHĀ*]

The most straightforward proof against this is to say: If every individual contingent was originated, it follows that they were all non-existent in pre-eternity. Furthermore, there are but two scenarios: either an individual contingent among the series of contingents has forever accompanied this non-existence, or it has not. If it has, there is implied a gathering between a thing's existence and non-existence, the impossibility of this is rationally self-evident. On the other hand, if no individual contingent accompanied non-existence it implies that all of them had a first and that none of them are beginningless.[128]

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[128] That is to say: Whatever contingent thing comes to your mind, you will assert that it has a first. The unequivocal rational judgment tells us that all contingents which come to mind—whether they have an end number or not—have a first, and hence the necessity of all of them having a first. Some people might imagine that what we say here is a case of begging the question, but they are mistaken. For the most we have done here is analyzed the contention of those who believe in contingents without a first. So essentially what we have said is this: Let us examine your contention; if it stands up to scrutiny it is rationally possible, but if not it is rationally impermissible [impossible]. Let us assume that we say every contingent has a first. All intelligent people will assert that this is rationally sound. And similarly, if we were to say that there is a chain made up of finite number of contingent parts, all of us will assert that it, too, has a first. This is also [rationally] sound by agreement.

Now, if we say that this chain is formed of an unending number of contingents, we cannot, at first glance, maintain that it must have a first. That is because we have previously assumed that it is unending. So therefore, the fact that it is not possible for it to have a first comes as a result of our claim that it is unending. This is just an assumption on their part and they have no proof for it. It is just a claim.

Our assertion, that every contingent thing, whether it has a first or not, must necessarily have a beginning, is unequivocal and rational, for every individual contingent must have a first, and if every individual contingent was originated, it would follow that they were all non-existent in pre-eternity—i.e., it is a must to affirm that all of them were previously non-existent.

4.2 THE RATIONAL PROOF FOR PRE-ETERNALITY

The rational proof that pre-eternality is necessary for Allah is that if He were not Pre-eternal He would be originated and contingently existent. That is because existents are either pre-eternal or contingent, and there is no intermediary alternative between the two. Were Allah contingent He would need an originator, and if we were to assume that this originator was like Him [i.e., contingent—according to this argument], the same would apply, and it would be a never ending circle or infinite regress, both of which are impossible and falsity;[129]

This argument is not a mere assumption; rather, it is conceded on both ends, and since each contingent was at one point non-existent, this must be affirmed for them in pre-eternity. Were we to assume that one of them has always been in pre-eternity, it would necessitate that it had been both non-existent and in pre-eternity. But that is a contradiction because it is the simultaneous existence and non-existence of something.

One might maintain that pre-eternity is not a limited thing, that one may argue the presence of a contingent therein, but the fact of the matter is that "pre-eternity" is a term that expresses beginninglessness. And furthermore we say that beginninglessness is a description of something and not something that self-subsists on its own. Moreover, it is not possible to say that something was created in beginninglessness, because of the contradiction in terms between beginninglessness and an existent that has a beginning. This means that pre-eternity is neither a specific moment in time nor it is a non-specific moment in time, lest one claim that a contingent or contingents were created therein. Instead, "pre-eternity" is a word we use to express the beginninglessness of something, and the mere usage of this word contradicts the usage of the word "contingent" (since contingent has a beginning). Understand this.

If you come to realize that pre-eternity is not a specific or a non-specific thing, and that it is rather a term that describes the concept of beginninglessness for something, you will come to understand that pre-eternity contradicts the existence of either an unending series of contingents that extend to pre-eternity or a specific contingent being in pre-eternity. (F)

[129] In other words, if we were to assume that this supposed originator is also contingent, then the same argument would apply. If this supposed originator had an originator or originators that have a definite number, it would be a never ending circle. If this supposed originator had an

that is because a never ending circle implies forwarding and delay for both at one instance and that each is the subject-doer and the object creating the other. If he is the subject-doer it would necessitate that he precedes the object, and if he is the object it would necessitate that he is after the subject-doer. It is impossible for something to be both "forwarded" and "delayed" at the same time because that is a gathering of two contradictories.

As for infinite regress, it implies a void [*farāgh*] and a non-ending chain, because infinite regress assumes the arrangement of a never ending series of past events. The fact that this never ending series of past events enters into existence dictates that it *does* have an end, because everything that exists has an end. Belief in infinite regress necessitates the gathering of two contradictories, which is impossible. If infinite regress and a never ending circle are invalidated, it is proven that God cannot be contingent. If it is proven that He is non-contingent, it follows that He must be Pre-eternal.

NOTICE

The difference between the contingently possible existence and the Necessary Existence is that the former is preceded by non-existence and it is possible for it to meet with future non-existence. As for the latter, He is not preceded by non-existence and it is impossible for Him to meet with future non-existence.

4.3 THE RATIONAL PROOF FOR ENDLESSNESS

Endlessness is a negation of non-existence occurring after existence. If it were possible for Allah's existence to cease, He would not be Pre-eternal. Pre-eternality is necessary for Him according to clear cut and unequivocal proofs, for without it, His existence would be permissible. The permissible existence can only be contingent and can only be preceded by non-existence. If

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originator or originators without end, it would entail infinite regress. The never ending circle applies to a set number, and infinite regress does not.—Tr it is proven that pre-eternality cannot be negated [from Him], it is proven that future non-existence is also impossible, and if that is proven impossible, it necessitates that God is Endless.

NOTICE

The above is an expression of the noble principle: "Everything whose pre-eternality is affirmed, its non-existence is impossible." There is nothing pre-eternal but Allah, the Exalted.

4.4 THE RATIONAL PROOF FOR ALLAH'S ABSOLUTE DISSIMILARITY FROM CONTINGENT BEINGS

Contingent beings are those things that exist after non-existence, be they substances, accidents, or other than that (if it is assumed that the world contains that which is neither a substance nor accident, such as pure abstractions [*mujarradāt*]). Allah is absolutely dissimilar to all of that. Everything besides Him is contingent, as is mentioned in the Hadith: "Allah was, and there was nothing with Him..."[130] If Allah were similar to some contingent beings He would have also been contingent—existing after non-existence—like them, because two similar things share in everything that is necessary, possible, and impossible. Contingents must be originated and it is impossible for them to be eternal, so if He were similar to contingent beings, contingency would have been necessary for Him as it is for

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[130] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī from ʿImrān b. Ḥuṣayn ﵁ who said: "I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and tied my camel to the gate, when some people from Banū Tamīm came to him and he said: 'Accept the glad tidings, O Banū Tamīm!' They twice responded: 'You have already given us glad tidings.' Soon after, some people from Yemen came to him and he ﷺ said: 'Accept the glad tidings, O people of Yemen, because Banū Tamīm did not accept them.' They replied: 'We have accepted it, O Messenger of Allah!' They then said: 'We came to you in order to ask about this matter.' He ﷺ said: 'Allah was and there was nothing else besides Him, and His Throne was upon the water, and He wrote everything in the reminder and created the heavens and the earth.' Suddenly, a caller called out: 'Your she-camel has gotten away, O son of Ḥuṣayn!' I [ʿImrān] set off to go and fetch it and lo and behold, it was stopped by a mirage. By Allah, I wished that I had left it.'" Elsewhere, this narration of ʿImrān was narrated with the wording: "Allah was, and there was nothing before Him, and His Throne was upon the water, then He created the heavens and the earth." In the version narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, it is related with the wording: "Allah was, and there was nothing besides Him, and His Throne was upon the water." Al-Bayhaqī narrated it with the wording: "Allah was, and there was nothing besides Him. His Throne is upon the water." He [al-Bayhaqī] then said: "This means—and Allah knows best—that He *then* created the

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water and *then* created the Throne upon the water and *then* created the pen and ordered it to write everything in the reminder." Ibn Ḥibbān also narrated it with the wording: "Allah was, and there was nothing else besides Him, and His Throne was upon the water." In another route, he [Ibn Ḥibbān] narrated it with the wording: "Allah was, and there was nothing before Him, and His Throne was upon the water, then He created the heavens and the earth."

Ibn Taymiyya objected to this report in all of its different narrations that prove Allah was and that there was nothing else besides Him. He claimed that there was no such proof found in the report, and with dubious evidence, he objected to all of the narrated wordings except the one that reads: "Allah was, and there was nothing before Him." That was a distortion on his part in order to profess his belief in the generic eternality of the universe, and to buttress the views of his anthropomorphic school of thought. We detailed all of this in our annotation of al-Ikhmīmī's rebuttal [of Ibn Taymiyya on this issue], as well as in our book *The Small Disclosure Regarding the Doctrine of Ibn Taymiyya*.

In his *Musnad*, Imam Aḥmad narrated from al-Muḥarrar b. Abī Hurayra, from his father who said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "People will not cease questioning until they say: 'Allah was before everything, so what was before Him?'" What this means is that inquiring into the beginning of every created thing is a sound question, and it has an answer because every created thing has a beginning. As for asking about the beginning of Allah, the Exalted, it is a false question from the start because He, the Exalted, does not have a beginning. He is before everything. Contemplate this narration, for it clearly points to and proves the falsehood of infinite regress. Ibn Taymiyya on the other hand, believed that there is an unending series of contingents going back to eternity. In that, he opposed all of these narrations and verses which prove that Allah, the Exalted, brought all of the creation into existence and gave them a beginning. It is impossible for there to be a continuous series of creation without beginning, yet Ibn Taymiyya based most of his school of thought on this false principle. (*F*) them.[131] It is rationally impossible for Allah to be contingent, as was proven in the section regarding His pre-eternality and endlessness and the rational proof for each.

Another proof is to say: If Allah were similar to any contingent thing it would necessitate that He is contingent on account of his similarity, and His divinity would necessitate that He is [also] Pre-eternal. It is impossible for something to be both pre-eternal and contingent because that is a gathering between two contradictories.

4.5 THE RATIONAL PROOF FOR ALLAH'S SELF-SUBSISTENCE

Self-subsistence means that the Divine Entity is free of needing a locus or determiner. It is an intrinsic self-sufficiency and freedom from needing a locus or determiner for Allah's Entity. Self-subsistence is therefore composed of two portions: freedom from needing a locus, and freedom from needing a determiner. The rational proof for the first portion is as follows: If He, the Exalted, were in need of a locus—that is to say, if He were in need of an Entity in which to subsist just as an attribute subsists within the one described with it—He would then be an attribute [of something else], which is a meaning among qualitative meanings. Nothing but an attribute needs a locus; an Entity does not need a locus in which to subsist. If it were possible for an entity to subsist within another entity, that would entail that the latter entity also subsists within an entity, and so on, and this necessitates infinite regress. That is because receptivity [*qubūl*] is a quality of every entity. An attribute is not described with qualitative or predicative attributes, because if an attribute was receptive to having another attribute subsist with it, that other attribute would be receptive to the same, thus necessitating an infinite regress and an unending series of existing things without end.

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[131] This judgment, that His contingency would have also been necessary due to similarity, follows from the rational principle that is agreed upon by all intelligent people: that resembling things take the same judgments. This principle is the foundation for a wide range of sciences and branches of knowledge known to man. It is not permissible for anyone to oppose it because it is self-evident in the mind. (*F*)

NOTICE

The understanding of the qualitative and predicative attributes is that they are described with essential or negating attributes, such as saying for example: "Allah's knowledge exists." This [existence] is an essential attribute, as are other qualitative attributes. So, the existence of every attribute is essential. In describing the negating attributes it is said: Allah's omnipotence is pre-eternal and endless, and so on. The same is said regarding Allah's knowledge and other qualitative attributes.

The attributes are only called negating attributes because, in and of themselves, they are non-existent and without an external reality. As for the qualitative attributes, they are existent and the predicative attributes are inseparable from them, which in itself entails infinite regress. For this reason [to avoid that implication] we say that an attribute is *not* described with either qualitative or predicative attributes. It is proven both rationally and textually that Allah, the Sublime and Majestic, is described with qualitative and predicative attributes; that means He is not an attribute. Rather, He is an Entity that does not resemble attributes; hence He does not need a locus.

The rational proof for the second portion [that He is free from needing a determiner] is as follows: If He was in need of a determiner and subject-doer He would be contingent, for only contingents are in need of a determiner. Based on the aforementioned rational and unequivocal proofs that He is not contingent, this is proven false.

4.6 THE RATIONAL PROOF FOR ALLAH'S ONENESS

There are various categories of Divine oneness: the oneness in divinity [*ulūhiyya*], the oneness in actions, the oneness in attributes, and the oneness in Entity. Oneness in divinity points to the fact that Allah is the only God. In other words, He is the only One uniquely described with divinity based on the fact that every contingently possible thing is in need of Him. Oneness in actions points to the fact Allah is the only Doer. In other words, Allah is the only Creator. Oneness in attributes points to the fact that He is the only One who is Eternally Living and Self-subsistent [*Ḥayy*]. Oneness in Entity points to the fact that Allah is the truly Existent.[132]

The rational proof for Allah's oneness is as follows: If He were not One in His Entity, attributes, and actions, then nothing of the universe—be it substances or accidents—would have existed because He would have been incapable [*'ājiz*]. Further clarifying this we say: If there was something similar to Him in divinity it would necessitate that both [He and that thing] are incapable, whether they were in co-operation, non co-operation, or had apportioned [the act of creation between them]. Each of these categories must either be by choice or by compulsion. If they were by compulsion it would necessitate that both are incapable, and thus the existence of the universe would be negated, which is absurd. If they were both in agreement by choice [to operate as gods], and both brought an indivisible element [*jawhar fard*] into being, such would entail the divisibility of that which is indivisible,[133] which is impossible because it cannot be divided. If they both brought the exact same thing into being it would imply the acquisition of what is already acquired, which is impossible. If one of them brought it into being while the other was incapable, the incapable one would not be a god because God is not incapable. It would also entail that the god who was able is not a god because it has already been assumed that he is like the other, and the one who is like something that is incapable is also incapable. If both are incapable then neither of the two is a god. If it is clear that both are incapable of bringing an indivisible element into being, it follows that they are incapable of bringing all other contingents into being as well, for there is no difference between one contingent possibility and another. If they differed with each other, in such instance as one of them wanted to move a body in a particular point in time and the other wanted to keep it in rest at that same time, neither of their wills could be fulfilled because that would be a gathering between two contraries. It is invalid for neither of their wills to be fulfilled because that would entail the raising of two contraries even though a body [that can be created] accepts both. It is invalid for one of them to carry out his will without the other because the incapability of one is a proof for the incapability of the other—as he is like the other. If they separated [i.e., went their own way so to speak] by choice it would entail that both are incapable of effecting that which is with the other, because the condition of a god is that his omnipotence must be generally linked with all contingently possible things. From this rational proof you come to know that there is only one God. This is a clear-cut and unequivocal proof in support of that.

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[132] The meaning of the statement: "the truly existent" is that Allah, the Exalted, is the only existent whose existence does not derive from other than Him. As for everything else besides Him, they all derive their existence from Him, the Exalted, who brings them into being. It is as if their existence is not real because it is non-intrinsic and is derived from another. Allah's existence is real because it is intrinsic. This is also the meaning of the statement "He is the only Eternally Living and Self-subsistent [*Ḥayy*]." You should understand this well and not imagine that it refers to the concept of oneness of being. (*F*)

[133] This argument rests on the premise that there are two doers that bring something into being. If it is assumed that they both bring the indivisible element into being, the only way this can be conceived is if we assume the "acquisition of what is already acquired [*taḥṣīl al-ḥāṣil*]," which is impossible. If this point was not assumed, the mind will immediately presume that each [god] brought a part of the single element into being—which we already assumed to be indivisible, so that would imply the division of that which is indivisible. (*F*)

NOTICE

This rational proof for oneness entails that the servants possess no independent efficacy in their contingent power, neither directly nor derived. They have only an acquisition thereof, which is the connection of the contingent power with that which is decreed, without there being independent efficacy.

NOTICE

There are three schools of thought regarding the affirmation of contingent power. The school of *Ahl al-Sunna* states that it exists and that it is connected with the action without independent efficacy. The school of the *Mu'tazila* states that it exists and that it possesses efficacy in voluntary actions. The school of the *Jabriyya* (fatalists) states that it does not exist at all. The correct school is that of *Ahl al-Sunna* and the other two schools are false. The school of the *Mu'tazila* is in opposition to the rational and textual proofs, because the rational proofs establish that there is no creator except Allah, the Exalted—as is found in the rational proof for Allah's oneness. As for the textual proof, Allah, the Exalted said: ❴*Allah is the Creator of everything.*❵ [al-Zumar: 62]. The school of the *Jabriyya* is self-evidently false because of the clear distinction between voluntary movement and trembling. The upshot of all this is that the power and action of the servant are both creations of Allah, the Exalted. He who created contingent power and choice within him [the servant] is able to command him [*kallafahu*], even if the servant does not possess independent efficacy in that. He [Allah] is not asked about what He does. [Shihāb al-Dīn al-Maqqarī,] the author of *Iḍā'a al-Dujunna*, said:

The power of the servant and other than that
Are all creations of the All-Powerful King
Yes, he possesses acquisition—by it he is legally responsible;
And yet he possesses no independent efficacy that is known

Acquisition [*kasb*] is the connection of the contingent power with an action, without there being independent efficacy. In addition to this, there is no efficacy within the conventional-customary means; fire has no effect in combustion; water has no effect in quenching thirst; a wall has no effect in providing shade; a garment has no effect in covering; a knife has no effect in cutting; and no other causes or contingent things have effect, for there is no doer but Allah alone.

4.7 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT ALLAH IS DESCRIBED WITH OMNIPOTENCE, WILL, KNOWLEDGE, AND LIFE

If any of these four qualitative and predicative attributes were negated from Him, or if any of their premises were negated, no contingent thing would exist because it is impossible for there to be something dependent without something on which it depends. The existence of the universe is dependent upon a doer who is qualified with these attributes. If omnipotence was negated, it would necessitate incapability, and one who is incapable cannot bring any contingent thing into being. If will was negated, specification would be negated and no contingent thing would exist. If knowledge was negated, all contingent things would be negated because it is impossible to intend something unknown. If life was negated, all of these attributes would have been negated and no contingent thing would exist. Direct observation proves that it is impossible to negate the existence of contingent things, so if the negation of contingents is proven false, the negation of any of these attributes is also proven false and it follows that God must be described with these attributes.

4.8 THE RATIONAL PROOF FOR HEARING, SIGHT, AND SPEECH

The proof for the affirmation of these attributes is found in the Book, the Sunna, and the rational faculties. The proof found in the Book and the Sunna has already been mentioned. The rational proof is to say: If Allah, the Exalted, was not described with these attributes it would necessitate that He is described with their opposites: deafness, blindness, and muteness. These opposites are imperfections and it is not permissible for us to ascribe them to the Glorious Master, because imperfections are impossible for Him. This means that it is impossible both textually and rationally. If He is not described with these attributes it follows that He is described with their opposites [deafness, blindness, and muteness], because that which is described can be described with either itself, its like, or its opposite. It is impossible for Him to be described with these opposites because they are imperfections, and imperfections are impossible for Him because they entail that He needs one who can remove them, and being in need negates self-sufficiency, and negation of self-sufficiency is impossible.

NOTICE

You should know that the textual proof for hearing, sight, and speech is stronger than the rational proof.

4.9 THE RATIONAL PROOFS FOR THE IMPOSSIBILITIES

The rational proofs for that which is necessary for Allah entail rational proofs for that which is impossible as well. That which is necessary can only be affirmed by negating the impossible. For example, it is impossible for Allah to be both All-Knowing and not All-Knowing. If that were possible it would entail the gathering of two contradictories, and that is false. That being said, He is either All-Knowing or He is ignorant—and there is no third alternative. Since we have affirmed that He is All-Knowing, He cannot be ignorant. The same can be said for the remaining attributes as well.

4.10 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT ALLAH CAN AFFECT THE POSSIBLE OR LEAVE IT

If it were rationally necessary or impossible for Allah to affect something that is contingently possible, the contingently possible—the existence or non-existence of which the mind judges as equally plausible—would be necessary and the mind could not conceptualize its non-existence. If it were rationally necessary for Him to affect some contingently possible things, it would necessitate that all possible things are transformed into necessities. If some were rationally impossible, it would necessitate that all possible things are transformed into impossibilities. This is false and inconceivable because such a proposition would entail the gathering of two contradictories. Looking at such things as possibilities, they accept both existence and non-existence. Looking at them as necessary, they can be existent. Looking at them as impossible, they can only be non-existent. For something to accept two things and not accept any but one at the same time is contradiction and is false.

NOTICE

If some are necessary all are necessary, and if some are impossible all are impossible. There is no distinction between one contingent possibility and another; whatever is affirmed for something is also affirmed for that which is like it. The upshot of this rational proof is that if the transformation of a contingent possibility into something necessary or impossible is proven false, the necessity or impossibility of something is also proven false. If that is proven false, then it follows that the contingent possibilities are permissible [*jā'iza*].

It is not rationally or legally necessary for Allah to do or leave anything. The textual proof for this found in the Book is the statement of the Exalted: ﴾*And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses.*﴿ [al-Qaṣaṣ: 68]. And from the Sunna: The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whatever Allah wills shall be and whatever He does not will shall not."

CHAPTER V

5.0 THE MESSENGERS —PEACE AND BLESSINGS BE UPON THEM

A Messenger[134] is a male adult human who is free and intelligent, to whom Allah has revealed a Sacred Law—be it in book form or

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[134] Imam ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī said: "The distinction between the two [Prophets and Messengers عليهم السلام] is that a Prophet is one to whom Allah, the Sublime and Majestic, has given revelation and the angel has brought it. A Messenger is one who brings a new Sacred Law or an abrogation of some of the rulings found in the Sacred Law preceding him." In his commentary on *al-Maqāṣid*, Imam al-Taftazānī inclined to the view that the terms "prophet" and "messenger" are synonymous in meaning. He said: "A Prophet as well as a Messenger is a human whom Allah tasks to convey what is revealed to him."

This is the same view followed by Imam al-Sanūsī in *Umm al-Barāhīn*. Al-Mullā Aḥmad al-Jundī said in his gloss upon the commentary of *al-ʿAqāʾid al-Nasafiyya*: "It is, however, opposed to the view of the majority, as well as what was preferred and chosen by al-Qāḍī al-Bayḍāwī in his exegesis of Allah's words: ❴*And We have not sent before you a Messenger or Prophet except...*❵ In his exegesis he said that a Messenger is one whom Allah has sent with a renewed Sacred Law and who calls others to it, and that a Prophet is more general, being one who is sent to the creation to affirm a previous Sacred Law. It has also been said that a Messenger is one who gathers between a revealed book given to him and an accompanying inimitable miracle, whereas a Prophet who is not a Messenger has no book. It has also been said that a Messenger is one who receives revelation via an angel, whereas a Prophet is one who receives his revelation by way of dream visions."

Al-Mullā Aḥmad said: "He [al-Bayḍāwī] did not tackle the issue of them both being equal." It is understood from his words that the preferred view regarding the "sameness" between the two (that was chosen by al-Saʿd [al-Taftazānī]) stands opposed to the view of the majority. Notice also that in all of these statements quoted from *Ahl al-Sunna*, none of them stated that a Prophet is *not* ordered to convey. On the contrary, some of these statements explicitly state that a Prophet is ordered to convey, and others are close to being explicit. Notice also the aspect of prophecy [*nubuwwa*] mentioned in the definition. For this reason, we have declared preponderant and correct the position that a Prophet is otherwise—and who was ordered by Him to convey it to the servants. This [definition] excludes an angel or Jinn. Allah has not sent either of the two as Messengers. This also excludes a slave because a Messenger can only be a free person. This also excludes a female, a hermaphrodite, a young child, as well as a simpleton, an unintelligent person, and a claimant to prophecy [*mutanabbī*] who is a liar. This definition also excludes a Prophet [*Nabī*] because he [al-Sanūsī] said: "and ordered him to convey it..." A Prophet, therefore, is an adult human who is free and intelligent, to whom Allah has revealed a Sacred Law, even though He did not order him to convey it to the creation.[135]

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commanded to convey, and that this is a point of agreement among them [the scholars], inasmuch as a Prophet is commanded to follow the Messenger before him.

We have interpreted the definitions mentioned above to mean that a Prophet is not ordered to convey the unique and exclusive Divine rulings that Allah teaches him—as you see in the above gloss. This definition does not mean that a Prophet is not ordered to convey anything whatsoever, because he is ordered to follow the Messenger before him. Contemplate this well. (*F*)

[135] "As for a Prophet, he is a human who receives a Sacred Law via revelation, whether he is ordered to convey it or not. A Prophet is more general than a Messenger, and this is the relied upon view. The opposing side holds two views: the first view states that a Messenger is one who receives a Sacred Law via revelation and who also has a book. According to this view, a Messenger must have a book and a Sacred Law; however, just because he has a book does not necessarily mean that he has a Sacred Law, for it is possible that the book contains exhortations only [and not religious law]. Some have objected to this view, arguing that there are very few books but there are a great number of Messengers, so how can having a book be a condition for one to be a Messenger? The second view states that a Messenger must possess one of two things: he must possess either a book or he must possess a Sacred Law that abrogates the Sacred Law before him. When the Torah was revealed to Mūsā ﵇ and one of the later Prophets from the Children of Israel was ordered to convey its rulings, that Prophet did not receive a book, nor did his Sacred Law abrogate that of Mūsā ﵇; hence, he was not a Messenger."

This was taken from the gloss of al-Dasūqī upon the commentary on al-Sanūsī's *Umm al-Barāhīn*, and this gloss is one of the best and most beneficial glosses. Concerning the meaning of prophecy and the

A Messenger is more specific than a Prophet; every Messenger is a Prophet, but not every Prophet is a Messenger. Some Prophets are Messengers and some are not, for they [the Prophets عليهم السلام] were not ordered to convey [their message].[136]

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difference between a Prophet and a Messenger, Imam al-Ḥalīmī said in *al-Minhāj*: "Prophecy [*nubuwwa*] is a word that is etymologically derived from the word "information/news" [*naba'*], but in this context, it refers to special information, something that Allah, the Sublime and Majestic, grants to one of His servants, thereby distinguishing him from others by it, in which He acquaints him with His Sacred Law and what it contains of commands, prohibitions, exhortations, guidance, and Divine Threats and Promises. Based upon this, prophecy is information and knowledge regarding reports, and we have mentioned the description of this earlier. A Prophet is one who is informed of these things. If, in addition to this blessing, he is ordered to convey it to people and call them to it, he is a Prophet *and* Messenger. If, on the other hand, it is revealed to him to act upon it within his own self and he is not ordered to convey it or call others to it, he is a Prophet and not a Messenger. Every Messenger is therefore a Prophet but not every Prophet is a Messenger." (*F*)

[136] The fact of the matter is we must provide more clarity regarding the distinction between prophecy and messengership [*risāla*], and we should seek to understand and direct the view of our scholars who expressed this definition—as opposed to those who are overly hasty and declare them grossly mistaken because of this definition, and who seek to convince readers that their view is without evidence, pure blind conformism, unadulterated error, and in clear opposition to the texts of the Qur'an! It is not the way of *Ahl al-Sunna* to unequivocally state something [one way or another] when it is nuanced and carries many possibilities.

If only this objection came from opponents among the anthropomorphists, it would not call for this much detail, but for this objection to come from one who ascribes himself to *Ahl al-Sunna* is shocking indeed. Here we shall mention a summary due to lack of space, and we will clarify and explain the definition mentioned in the main text. We say, and with Allah is all success:

Here we shall explain how our scholars understood the manner in which our master Muhammad ﷺ ascended the ranks of prophecy and messengership. This will clarify for the readers what the scholars intended in their distinction between a Prophet and a Messenger. It is quite easy for someone ignorant of these ranks to oppose them in their distinction.

When the time drew near for the prophecy of our liege lord Muhammad ﷺ and he was forty years of age, Allah made solitary retreat and seclusion beloved to him. It was made beloved to him ﷺ at an age in which his faculties and strength were complete, so as to prepare him for his mission and destiny. He ﷺ would withdraw to the cave of Ḥirā' for many nights at a time, and it has been said that he would withdraw there for one month in a year, as was the custom of the Quraysh when they would fulfil vows to spend time at Ḥirā'. After his withdrawal, he ﷺ would return to his family until he went back to the cave again as Allah willed. His food and drink would be brought to him and he ﷺ would eat from it and give the rest away in charity to the poor. During this time, he was unaware of prophecy. To the people, it was ambiguous, and to the people of the previous scriptures it was known, in order that its sudden and unexpected descent serve as a prevention of any affectation, lest others claim he ﷺ made it up—and had someone made up a claim [to it] and affected behaviour hinting to it, the means and signs of that would be uncovered over time and it would not be hidden to others who wish to take on the same role or interpret it.

The Messenger ﷺ remained in his solitary retreat until Allah made manifest upon him the portents of his prophecy; by it, waking him up from being unaware and giving him glad tidings after an extended period [between Prophets]. After the glad tidings, He tasked him ﷺ to deliver the message and enabled him to traverse that path in steps and ranks so as to prepare him to shoulder its burdens and know its rights and not be caught unaware. This was a subtle gentleness and bounty from Allah to him ﷺ, and a motivation for his nation to follow him. Glorified and Exalted is He who is gentle with His servants and who bestows favours upon His creation!

The states that he ﷺ traversed, from the time he knew he was a Prophet, to the time he was a Messenger who conveyed the revelation, are six in number:

[1] Having true dream visions showing his ﷺ future.

[2] Being granted unique things that distinguished him ﷺ from the rest of creation; his being purified from filth and impurities so as to cleanse him and serve as a portent and warning of things to come.

[3] Receiving glad tidings of prophecy from an angel who informed him ﷺ of it on behalf of his Lord. This was a feeling and sensation and it was not accompanied by any legal obligations or warnings, and was not sent via revelation. He ﷺ did not see anything or anyone, rather it was a feeling and sensation of an angel accompanied by a sign and portent, the sensation of which sufficed from seeing it or speaking about it. This stage was in order for him ﷺ to know that he was a Prophet, so as to

prepare for the coming revelation and make easy for him the long gaps in time, making him more patient in times of difficulty and more thankful for bounties.

[4] The angel Jibrīl's descending to him ﷺ with revelation from his Lord. He ﷺ saw his form and heard his address. Jibrīl informed him that he [Muhammad ﷺ] was the Prophet of Allah and His Messenger. Jibrīl sufficed with informing him ﷺ of that and did not command him to convey it [to others], so as to allow him to directly and experientially witness it first hand and gain confidence in it and its veracity and dispel any notions of doubt. This occurred when Jibrīl came to him ﷺ while he was in the cave of Ḥirā' and he ordered him to recite. The revelation Jibrīl brought to him was only to inform him that he ﷺ was a Prophet and that Allah had chosen him, enabling him thereby to await His commands and what was to be revealed to him, and following His orders and awaiting his duties. At this time, he ﷺ was allowed to inform others and was not allowed to warn: ﴾*And as for the favours of your Lord, speak about them.*﴿ In other words, "speak to others about the bounty of prophecy." He ﷺ would make mention of it as a way of spreading glad tidings.

[5] After receiving prophecy he ﷺ was commanded to warn others, effectively becoming a Messenger. At this time, the Qur'an was revealed to him ﷺ with its commands and prohibitions. During this period he ﷺ was sent [as a Messenger], but was not yet commanded to openly announce it and warn all. At this time he ﷺ would convey the message to those with whom he felt safe and he would hold tightly to those who responded to his call. At this stage the words of Allah, the Exalted, were revealed to him ﷺ: ﴾*O you who covers himself* [*with a garment*]! *Arise and warn; glorify your Lord; purify your garments; avoid filth; do not give a favour to acquire more; and be patient for your Lord.*﴿ This verse established his ﷺ prophecy with revelation and warning others, even though the revelation continued to come.

[6] He ﷺ was ordered to convey the warning to others outside of his family and openly proclaim and call to Islam after having kept it a secret. Allah, the Exalted, revealed to him ﷺ: ﴾*Be strong with that with which you have been commanded and turn away from the ignorant.*﴿ Ibn Isḥāq said: "This was [revealed] three years after his ﷺ prophecy."

This is the sum of what was mentioned by al-Nabahānī in his book *Ḥujja Allāh 'alā al-'Ālamīn fī Mu'jizāt Sayyid al-Mursalīn*. In *al-Mawāhib al-Ladūniyya*, al-Qasṭalānī quoted Imam al-Nawawī: "The first thing that must be called to and warned about is Divine oneness [*tawḥīd*], followed by the obligations mentioned by Allah in the first part of the chapter of

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al-Muzammil. It was then abrogated by what is at the end of it, and that was subsequently abrogated by the obligation of the five prayers that were made incumbent on the night of the miraculous journey in Mecca...

"Afterwards, the revelation stopped for a period of time, and this proved difficult and sad for him [the Prophet ﷺ]. This period of time denotes a delay, and this was done so as remove the terror that he ﷺ had and to cause him to long for the revelation's return. The opinion of Ibn Isḥāq is that this delay was for a period of three years.

"...It is clear that his prophecy preceded his messengership; the revelation of the chapter: ﴾*Recite...*﴿ made him ﷺ a Prophet, and the revelation of *al-Muddathir* made him a Messenger sent with glad tidings, warnings, and legislation—and this most certainly came after the first chapter, because the chapter *Iqra'* contains mention of the stages of human development: creation, teaching, and understanding, and this is fitting to be the first chapter revealed and this is a natural order; the Exalted mentioned the knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and prophecy He conferred upon His Prophet, and reminded him of His favours in the context of informing His servants of the bounties of eloquence in understanding, expression, and written communication. After that chapter He ordered him to arise and warn His servants."

Consider here how the scholars textually state that our liege lord Muhammad ﷺ was a Prophet after receiving revelation and then he became a Messenger after receiving the command to convey the message. This is how the scholars understood the distinction between prophecy and messengership. The way in which our liege lord Muhammad was dispatched is a true example of the soundness of their understanding, and based upon it, their principle proves true that "Every Messenger is a Prophet but not every Prophet is a Messenger." Based upon the view of the one who says that a Prophet is a person whom Allah commands to convey the Sacred Law before him, not every Messenger is a Prophet, because not every Messenger is given a new Sacred Law and they are [instead] commanded to follow the Sacred Law before them.

The most correct thing to say is that if we assert that the meaning of the well known definition mentioned in the main text is that a Prophet might not be commanded to convey the message, then it is a weak definition because everyone is commanded to convey the message, which at least entails conveying the message of a previous Messenger. If every believer is ordered to convey the message, how can a Prophet not be commanded to convey it as well? This notion is preposterous. If, on the other hand, we said that the meaning of prophecy is for a Prophet to convey something from the Lord, regardless if that Prophet was commanded with its conveyance or not, then it would be a strong meaning. This is the apparent meaning of al-ʿIzz b. ʿAbd al-Salām's words in *al-Qawāʿid al-Kubrā*. The sum of his statement is that the word "Prophet" is a name given to a person who receives revelation from his Lord about certain matters, and the word "Messenger" is for someone who, in addition to that, is also ordered to convey to the people. In this way, messengership can be conceptualized and understood to be rationally separate from the concept of prophecy, even though there is no separation in reality—which means that it is not possible to find a Messenger who is not a Prophet. A Messenger is one who has passed the two levels, whereas a Prophet is one who has passed only one level. In this regard, al-ʿIzz said that the rank of prophecy is better than the rank of messengership because the former is connected to Allah from both sides, whereas with messengership the connection to Allah is with one side only. He did not say that a Prophet is better than a Messenger, because a Messenger, in addition to him being a Messenger, is a Prophet as well. We are most certain that the one who obtains two virtues is better that the one who obtains only one. There is no call, therefore, for rebuke or censure. Contemplate this well.

In this hasty write up, our intention is only to clarify a permissible angle and logical explanation for the well known definition. This issue is in need of more detail and investigation, especially given the fact that the apparent words in the main text might be understood to mean that there could be found a Prophet who was not commanded to convey whatsoever. Furthermore, that is incorrect unless we say that the knowledge Allah revealed to such a Prophet only relates to His Divine Entity and Exalted Names, so as to increase said Prophet in knowledge of Him. There is no reason to convey such knowledge to the generality of people because what they have already heard from their previous Prophets is enough to set straight their affairs. Such knowledge is only the privy some of the elect. For this reason, we say that some of what Allah revealed to the Messenger ﷺ was for him only, and he was not ordered to convey it, such as the secrets of Godhood and so on. If understood in this light, the words of the scholars are correct. This does not detract from the fact that a Messenger is ordered to convey insomuch as he is ordered to follow the Messenger before him, because the scholars explicitly stated that it is an obligation upon a Prophet to inform the people of his prophecy so they can show him proper respect and realize the bounty of Allah upon humanity, thereby increasing in their exaltation and humility before Him. This itself is a type of conveyance, so contemplate these words well. (*F*)

NOTICE

Messengers do not convey everything they know. There are other matters that the Messengers ﵇ know but do not convey,[137] however they do convey everything that they are commanded. This is because there are three categories of things: that which they are ordered to convey, that which they are ordered to conceal, and that in which they are given a choice.

5.1 WHAT IS NECESSARY[138] FOR THE MESSENGERS ﵇

To add to this, after the publication of the first edition, our pupil, Shaykh Muhammad al-ʿĀʾidī, and his colleague Shaykh Rabīʿ—may Allah grant both of them success—informed us that they found a passage in al-Shabarkhītī's commentary upon al-Nawawī's Forty Hadith collection that speaks about the meaning of this preference between a Prophet and a Messenger. I looked it up and reproduced it here for its benefit. Al-Shabarkhītī said: "The reason why messengership is better than prophecy was mentioned by al-Qarāfī, who maintained that messengership results in guidance for the Umma, whereas prophecy is only for that Prophet. So, the comparison between the two in the area of prophecy is like the comparison between the devout worshipper and the scholar. Furthermore, this difference exists insomuch as both are gathered within one place and subsisting within one person. When they are in separate places, however, there is no disagreement that messengership is better than prophecy. This is self-evident, as messengership is both it [prophecy], and more."

Before these words, he said: "And according to consensus, he is better than a Prophet because he is distinguished with messengership, which is better than prophecy according to the most correct view and contrary to the view of Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām." This does not detract from our explanation of al-ʿIzz's words; rather, it qualifies it further according to what we stated. (*F*)

[137] This is especially with regards to the secrets of Godhood and the affairs of the Hereafter. (*F*)

[138] What is meant here by "necessary" are those things that are inseparable [from them], even if [established] only by a legal proof. This is because the proof that faithfulness and conveyance are necessary is a legal [proof], whereas the proof for the necessity of truthfulness is a rational [proof]—according to the view that the evidence established by an inimitable miracle is rational—or it is stipulatory according to the view that its indication is stipulatory because it is akin to Allah saying: "My servant is truthful in what he says." So, based on the words of

Of these, truthfulness [*ṣidq*][139] in their claim to messengership and what they convey from Allah, the Exalted. The meaning of truthfulness is the agreement of information with the self-same reality, whether it conforms to the actual belief [of the conveyor] or not. Another necessary quality is faithfulness [*amāna*]. This means that they عليهم السلام safeguard their outward bodies and inward selves from falling into that which is either unlawful or detested.[140]

Another necessary quality is conveyance [*tablīgh*]. This is conveyance of what they عليهم السلام were ordered to convey to the creation.[141] And further, both intelligence and sagacity are necessary qualities.

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al-Sanūsī, its indication is stipulatory. The correct view, however, is that it is conventional based on the fact that its indication is conventional. In other words, it is based upon the common notion that the inimitable miracle is a sign of truthfulness. (*B*)

[139] You should know that truthfulness is of three categories: truthfulness in the claim to messengership, truthfulness in the rulings they convey from Allah, the Exalted, and truthfulness in their words regarding worldly matters, such as the statements: "Zayd stood up," "ʿAmr sat down," and "I ate" and "I drank," and so on.

What is meant here [in the main text] are the first two categories, because the rational proof that he later mentions only proves these two. As for the third category, it is included in faithfulness. If one argues that the first two categories are also included in faithfulness, or that even conveyance is included in it thus there being no need to mention them all separately, we respond by saying that it has already been mentioned how dangerous ignorance is in this tremendous science, so generalities are not enough. (*B*)

[140] Some have defined it as not displaying treachery by doing that which is unlawful or detested. Others said that it is a firmly entrenched strength that prevents its possessor from falling into prohibited matters. No matter the case, faithfulness refers back to what some expressed as infallibility. (*B*)

[141] There are three categories of things: that which they are ordered to convey, that which they are ordered to conceal, and that in which they are given a choice. It is necessary for them to convey the first category and it is necessary for us to believe that they conveyed it; it is necessary for them to conceal the second category and it is necessary for us to believe that they concealed it; an in the third category they were given choice, so they informed whomever they wanted. (*F*)

5.2 WHAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE MESSENGERS ﷺ

It is impossible for them—peace and blessings be upon them—to possess the opposites of these necessary attributes. They are as follows:

5.2.1 LYING

The meaning of lying is the non-conformity of information with the self-same reality, whether it conforms to the actual belief [of the conveyor] or not.

5.2.2 TREACHERY [*KHIYĀNA*]

Treachery is through committing an unlawful action that they ﷺ forbade, such as the prohibition of fornication and drinking alcohol, or committing an act that is detested, such as reciting the Qur'an in bowing and prostration. As for them—peace and blessings be upon them—doing something detested in some instances for the sake of legislation, such an act is permissible. The detestable act that cannot and will not be done by them is the detestable act that is not for the sake of legislation. Faithfulness is necessary for them and treachery is impossible for them; they ﷺ are divinely protected from minor sins and enormities before and after prophecy. Not a single unlawful or detestable act occurs from them intentionally or unintentionally,[142] from the time of their birth until the time they ﷺ move on the Abode of Honour [Paradise].[143]

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[142] What is meant by "detestable" here also includes that which [is termed] "against what is best" [*khilāf al-awlā*]. This is not countered by citing that he ﷺ relieved himself while standing, and performed ablutions by wiping the limbs only once or twice [instead of three times]. That is because he relieved himself [whilst standing] in order to demonstrate its permissibility—and that demonstration is obligatory for him ﷺ. From this it is known that they—peace and blessings be upon them—did not fall into the unlawful or detestable insomuch as it is detestable. In addition to this, they do not engage in the legally neutral [*mubāḥ*] acts insomuch as they are merely permissible; rather, they engage in them for the sake of doing an act of closeness [to Allah]: legislating, or gaining strength to perform acts of worship, and so on. All of their actions revolve around the sphere of what is obligatory and recommended. How can this not be the case [for the Prophets], when

NOTICE

There occurs in a Hadith: "The believer can be stamped with every trait except treachery and lying."[144]

5.2.3 CONCEALMENT

It is impossible—whether intentionally or unintentionally—for them [the Messengers ﵇] to conceal anything they were ordered to convey to the creation to whom they were sent.[145]

NOTICE

Al-Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ said in his *al-Shifā*: "Likewise, it is impossible for them to be insane or afflicted with leprosy or smallpox. That which our liege lord Ayyūb had was not leprosy."

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even some of the saints are given success [in reaching that]? If that is so, it is more appropriate to be for the choice-elect of Allah's creation. (*B*)

[143] You should know that there is no difference between a minor sin and an enormity: they [the Messengers ﵇] do not fall into minor sins or enormities—even if only out of forgetfulness—either before they are tasked with their prophetic missions or after. It cannot be said that what occurred out of forgetfulness, or before being tasked with the mission, is not in fact disobedience, because we say that it is in the image of disobedience. Any report that would allude to them having fallen into sin must be interpreted [*taʾwīl*]. (*B*)

[144] This was narrated by al-Quḍāʿī in *Musnad al-Shihāb* from Muṣʿab b. Saʿd from his father: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'The believer can be stamped with every trait but that of treachery and lying.'" It was also narrated by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *Makārim al-Akhlāq* from Muṣʿab b. Saʿd from his father: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Every trait can be stamped or marked on the believer but that of treachery and lying.'" (*F*)

[145] It is impossible [for them ﵇] to unintentionally forget to convey the message. It is, however, permissible for them to forget in other matters. Once, he ﷺ forgot while engaged in prayer; however, it was only because his mighty heart was occupied with Allah. This meaning was alluded [by the poet] who said:

O ye who asks me about the Messenger of Allah
How he could be absent minded
And absent mindedness comes only from the heart of every heedless one
Whereas his innermost secret was absent from everything
So he was absentminded from everything other than Allah;
And exaltation is for Allah

5.2.4 STUPIDITY AND DIM-WITTEDNESS

Stupidity and dim-wittedness are both impossible for them—peace and blessings be upon them all.

5.3 WHAT IS POSSIBLE FOR THE MESSENGERS ﵇

It is both rationally and legally possible for the Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them—to possess accidents, which are incidental and renewing characteristics (as opposed to the pre-eternal attributes of Allah, the Exalted, for no one else can be given those attributes because the contingent cannot be described with the attributes of the pre-eternal). It is permissible for the Messengers ﵇ to possess human qualities that do not lead to deficiency or detract from their lofty stations with Allah, such as mild sicknesses like fevers, headaches, and the like.

As for serious illness and ailments like leprosy and smallpox that people would find disgusting, or madness (whether small or great), blindness, being one-eyed, having sexually transmitted diseases like herpes, repulsiveness, being castrated, or being impotent, none of those are permissible for them. Similar to the permissibility of mild illness is sleep, injuries, being killed, experiencing harm from the creation in word or deed, death, marriage, divorce, buying and selling, hunger, thirst, and forgetfulness in prayer. All of these things are permissible.

Everything that is necessary for the Messengers ﵇ is also necessary for the Prophets. The Prophets have not been sent or ordered to convey to the creation; however, it is obligatory upon a Prophet to inform the people that he is a Prophet so they can show proper deference to him.

NOTICE

The Christians described Prophet ʿĪsā ﵇ with the attributes of Allah. They claimed that he was the pre-eternal attribute of knowledge subsisting in the body of ʿĪsā ﵇. For that reason, they made him into a god, and that was based on a gross error on their part that no rational person could possibly make.

NOTICE

The Jews described the Prophets with unbefitting traits and claimed they were negligent, whereas the Christians went to extremes exalting ʿĪsā ؑ above his rank, saying that he is the son of Allah.

NOTICE

The report stating the Prophet Shuʿayb ؑ was blind is not reliable, as was mentioned by the verifying scholars. As for Yaʿqūb ؑ, he experienced a covering that did not prevent him from seeing and it was soon after removed from him. As for the affliction of Ayyūb ؑ, it was not an affliction that drove people away, nor did it stay with him for a long time. On the contrary, after his affliction his body became even more beautiful than it was prior to the affliction.

NOTICE

The eyes of the Prophets sleep but their hearts do not sleep.[146] That is either all of the time or most of the time, as verified by Imam al-Nawawī.

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[146] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī in his rigorously authentic collection from Abū Salama b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who asked ʿĀʾisha ؓ: "How was the prayer of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the month of Ramaḍān?" She replied: "He would not add more than eleven prayer units either inside or outside of Ramaḍān. He would pray four prayer units—and do not ask about their beauty and length—then he would pray four prayer units—and do not ask about their beauty and length—then he would pray three. I asked him: 'O Messenger of Allah! Do you go to sleep before you pray the odd unit [*witr*] prayer?' He replied: 'My eyes sleep but my heart does not sleep.'"

Al-Bukhārī also narrated from Shurayk b. ʿAbdullāh b. Abī Nimr who stated: "I heard Anas b. Mālik narrate to us about the night in which the Prophet ﷺ was taken on the night journey from the Mosque of the Kaʿba. He ﷺ mentioned that before he received the revelation, three parties came to him while he was sleeping in the Sacred Mosque. The first of them said: 'Which one is he?' The second of them replied: 'He is the best of them.' The third of them said: 'Take the best of them,' and that was that. Not long after, they came back another night and saw his

5.4 THE RATIONAL PROOFS

After having explained the things that relate to the Messengers عليهم السلام, here we shall present the rational proofs for them.

5.4.1 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT TRUTHFULNESS IS NECESSARY FOR THEM عليهم السلام

If the Messengers عليهم السلام were not truthful and had they lied, it would have implied that there is falsehood in the inimitable miracles[147] that indicate their veracity. These miracles are like

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ﷺ heart; his eyes sleep but his heart does not. The same is for the other Prophets as well; their eyes sleep but their hearts do not. After this, Jibrīl took him and ascended with him into the heavens."

In his *Sunan al-Kubrā*, al-Nasā'ī narrated from Sa'īd b. Jubayr from Ibn 'Abbās, who said: "Some Jews came to the Prophet ﷺ and said to him: 'O Abū al-Qāsim! We would like to ask you about some things; if you answer us correctly we will follow you, confirm you, and believe in you.' So he ﷺ took a covenant from them as Israel took a covenant from his sons when they said 'Allah is ever a witness over what we say.' They said: 'Inform us of the sign of the Prophet.' He ﷺ replied: 'His eyes sleep but his heart does not...'" This was also narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*.

In his *Sunan al-Kubrā*, al-Bayhaqī narrated from 'Ā'isha رضي الله عنها in the Hadith regarding the night prayer: She رضي الله عنها said: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Do you go to sleep before you pray the odd unit [*witr*] prayer?' He replied: 'O 'Ā'isha! My eyes sleep but my heart does not sleep.'" Al-Bayhaqī said: "This was narrated by al-Bukhārī in the rigorously authentic collection from al-Qa'anbī. Muslim narrated it from Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā from Mālik. We have narrated [reports] from Jābir b. 'Abdullāh, Abū Hurayra, and Anas b. Mālik from the Prophet ﷺ that indicate that his two eyes would sleep but that his heart would not sleep. Anas b. Mālik said: 'And likewise, the eyes of the Prophets sleep but their hearts do not.'"

This was also narrated by al-Ḥākim in his *Mustadrak* from Anas رضي الله عنه who said: "The eyes of the Prophet ﷺ would sleep but his heart would not." This report is rigorously authentic based upon the conditions of Muslim, although neither [he nor al-Bukhārī] relayed it. (*F*)

[147] An inimitable miracle is a break in natural phenomena that is accompanied by a claim of prophecy or messengership. It is taken from the word *i'jāz* [inimitability] because others are utterly incapable of producing anything like it. An inimitable miracle could be a statement, such as the Qur'an, or it could be an action, such as when water poured

Allah's way of saying: "My servant who claims prophecy is truthful in everything he conveys from Me." An inimitable miracle indicates the truthfulness and veracity of the Messengers عليهم السلام just like speech; if, therefore, the Messengers عليهم السلام were untruthful, it would imply that Allah was lying when He confirmed them via inimitable miracles, and it is impossible for His statements to contain lies because what He informs is in agreement with His knowledge, which can only be truth. If it is proven that He cannot lie in what He informs, it is proven that the Messengers عليهم السلام cannot lie in what they relate. If it is proven that that the Messengers عليهم السلام cannot lie in what they inform, it follows that they must be truthful, which is the conclusion sought after here.

The proof that the Messengers عليهم السلام are truthful is from the texts of the Book, the Sunna, and consensus. As for the Book, the Exalted said about our Prophet ﷺ: ﴾*He does not speak from his own desire. It is but revelation revealed*﴿ [al-Najm: 3–4] and He said: ﴾*So let the truthful ones be asked about their truthfulness*﴿ [al-Aḥzāb: 8] and He said: ﴾*And Allah and His Messenger were truthful.*﴿ [ibid, 22]. As for the Sunna, there is the Prophet's statement ﷺ: "You shall not find me as a miser, a liar, or a coward."[148] As for the

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from the fingers of our Prophet ﷺ, or when the moon split for him. It could also be other than a statement or an action, such as when the fire did not consume our liege lord Ibrāhīm عليه السلام.

No matter what form an inimitable miracle takes, it proves that Allah declares the veracity of the one upon whose hand it manifests, because it is akin to a declaration from Allah, as if He is saying: "My servant is truthful in everything that he conveys from Me." If the Messengers عليهم السلام were not truthful, that would imply that the inimitable miracle sent by Allah—that was akin to Him informing [others]—is a lie, and lying is impossible for Allah, the Exalted. (*M*)

[148] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī from Muhammad b. Jubayr who said: "Jubayr b. Maṭ'am informed me, saying that when he was travelling with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ along with other people in a caravan from Ḥunayn, the people surrounded him and asked him so fervently that he was forced to go to Samura [b. Jundub] and in the process, his upper garment came off. The Prophet ﷺ then stood and said: 'Give me my upper garment; if I possessed bounties equal to the number of these prickly shrubs, I would have apportioned them among you all, and you shall not find me as one who is stingy, a liar, or a coward.'" Al-Ṭabarānī

consensus, the Muslims have unanimously agreed that it is necessary for the Messengers and Prophets—peace and blessings be upon them—to be truthful.

NOTICE

The meaning of an inimitable miracle [*mu'jiza*] is a break in natural phenomena accompanied with a challenge that meets no opposition.

NOTICE

A miraculous gift [*karāma*][149] is a break in natural phenomena that is *not* accompanied with a claim to prophecy or a precursor to it. This is for the saints. A miraculous gift that is accompanied with a claim to prophecy is called an inimitable miracle [*mu'jiza*]. When it is a precursor to prophecy it is called *irhāṣ* and it precedes their claim to prophecy, such as when the clouds shaded the Prophet ﷺ. There is also something called *i'āna* (assistance), which occurs with some of the common believers when they are rescued from trials and destruction, even though they have not reached the level of sainthood. Being lured into destruction [*istidrāj*] is [a break in natural phenomena] that occurs with some of the disbelievers and corrupt people, and is in agreement with their

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also narrated this in his *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* from 'Amr b. Shu'ayb from his father and then from his grandfather. It contains the wording: "and you shall not find me as one who is stingy, a coward, or a liar." In [*al-Mu'jam*] *al-Kabīr* it is reported from Muhammad b. Jubayr b. Maṭ'am with the wording: "and you shall not find me as one who is stingy, a coward, or a liar." This was also narrated by Ibn Ḥibbān from him, and was narrated by Mālik in the *Muwaṭṭa'* from 'Amr b. Shu'ayb. (*F*)

[149] Abū 'Abdullāh al-Ḥalīmī (from *Ahl al-Sunna*) and the *Mu'tazila* denied the occurrence of miraculous gifts [*karamāt*]. They claimed that if miraculous gifts existed they would be confused with the inimitable miracles of the Prophets, which would result in confusion about who is a Prophet and who is not. They also claimed that if miraculous gifts were found, and if they remained and became numerous, then miraculous gifts would no longer be considered preternatural phenomena. (*Ṣ*)

The majority view of *Ahl al-Sunna* is that miraculous gifts are rationally possible and may occur both during the life of the saint and after his death. Whoever denies this should not be given any consideration at all. (*M*) desires. Belittlement [*ihāna*] also occurs with the disbelievers and corrupt people, although it is against their desires, as what occurred with Musaylama the liar when he spat into a well to increase it in sweetness and it became bitter and salty. "Being lead to misguidance" [*iḍlāl*] is what occurs upon the hand of one who wishes to lead the creation astray, such as the False Messiah [*al-Dajjāl*]. As for magic and sleight of hand techniques, neither is considered a break in natural phenomena because there are means for learning them. There is no independent causality for the servants with the breaks in natural phenomena; the only Doer is Allah alone.

5.4.2 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT FAITHFULNESS IS NECESSARY FOR THEM عليهم السلام

If they عليهم السلام had proven themselves treacherous by committing an unlawful or detestable act, both the unlawful and the detestable would have become obedience for them. This is because Allah commanded us—the assembly of servants—to follow them عليهم السلام in their statements and actions.[150]

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[150] Allah also commanded us to follow them عليهم السلام in their tacit approvals and intentional silence when an action is done [in their presence]. It is impossible for them to tacitly approve of an error. The only exceptions to this are those things unique to them, such as marrying more than four [wives]. From this it is known that no legally responsible person among us should hesitate in doing anything established from the Prophet ﷺ, with the contention that it might be unique to him. On the contrary, one should follow him in all of his statements and actions except that which is established to be from those things unique to him. This is because the statement of the Exalted is all inclusive: ﴾*Say: "If you love Allah, follow me..."*﴿

The Companions unanimously agreed about following him ﷺ in all of his statements and actions without hesitation. That was usually the case; however, there are certain instances in which they hesitated, such as in the conquest of Mecca, when the Prophet ﷺ ordered them to break their fast yet they continued [fasting] until he took a cup and drank from it, and then they drank. Another example is during the battle of Ḥudaybiyya, when he ﷺ ordered them to sacrifice the animals and then shave their heads. They did not do it because they were so engrossed in thinking about the extreme difficulties they had experienced. He ﷺ and his Companions set out to perform the minor pilgrimage [*'umra*] and they descended in the lowermost part of Ḥudaybiyya and the idolaters prevented them from entering Mecca. As a result, the Prophet ﷺ sent 'Uthmān b. 'Affān with a letter to the nobles of Mecca informing them that he has come to perform the minor pilgrimage and that he had not come to fight. The idolaters were persistent and stubbornly refused him ﷺ entry into Mecca that year. There then occurred some fighting in which one of the two groups attacked the other, and a skirmish involving rocks and arrows erupted. When this occurred, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ held some of them [the idolaters] and they held 'Uthmān b. 'Affān ﵁. Iblīs then spread the rumour that they [the idolaters] had killed him ['Uthmān], so the Prophet ﷺ said: "We shall prepare war against them" and he called the people to the tree in order to take the pledge of fealty from them with the condition of either death or not fleeing. When the disbelievers heard of this pledge, they became frightened and dispatched a man from among them to apologize and explain that the fighting only took place from their foolish ones, and to request the release of those imprisoned [from the idolaters]. The Prophet ﷺ responded: "I will not release them until you release all my companions." The man responded: "You have behaved fairly toward us," and he informed his compatriots [in Mecca], who then released 'Uthmān along with a group of the Muslims. An armistice was agreed to between the Prophet ﷺ and that man with the condition that fighting cease between the two parties for ten years and that each grant a surety of protection to the other, and that they [the Muslims] return that year [to Medina] and come back the next year to perform the minor pilgrimage, and for them [the Muslims] to return to them [the Meccans] whoever comes [to Medina] as a Muslim, while not calling for the return of those who come to Mecca from them.

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib wrote all of this down in a letter. The Muslims detested these conditions and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Are we to return [people] and they will not?" He said: "Yes. As for the one among us who goes to them, then may Allah make him remote, and whoever among them comes to us, then Allah shall make an opening and a way out for him." He ﷺ then said to his Companions: "Stand up, offer the sacrifice, and shave your heads." The narrator added: "By Allah, not a single one among them stood up until he ﷺ repeated his commands thrice. When they did not comply, he went to Umm Salama and said: 'The Muslims have fallen to destruction; I commanded them to shave their heads and offer the sacrifice but they did not comply.' She said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Do not blame them, for this armistice is difficult for them; go out and do not speak to any of them until you do it yourself.' So he ﷺ went out and sacrificed with his own hand and then called for his barber.

The Exalted said regarding our Prophet ﷺ: ﴾*Say*: "*If you truly love Allah, follow me; Allah shall love you and forgive you your sins, and Allah is the Most Forgiving, the Merciful*"﴿ [Āl-ʿImrān: 31], and ﴾*And follow him so perhaps you may be guided.*﴿ [al-Aʿrāf: 158]. He ﷺ said: "Stick closely to my Sunna, and the Sunna of the rightly guided and upright Caliphs."[151] Allah, the Exalted, does not order something that is unlawful or detestable, because He said: ﴾*Say*: "*Indeed, Allah does not order with vileness.*"﴿ [al-Aʿrāf: 28]. It is impossible, therefore, for the unlawful or detestable to transform into obedience for them because that is a gathering between two contradictories. If the transformation of the unlawful and detestable into obedience for them is proven to be false, it also follows that they ﵈ cannot be treacherous. If treachery from them is proven to be false, it is necessary that they ﵈ are faithful.

5.4.3 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT THEY ﵈ CONVEYED WHAT THEY WERE ORDERED TO CONVEY

This is along the same lines as the previous rational proof. If the Messengers ﵈ had concealed, then concealment—which is unlawful—would have become an act of obedience for them, because Allah commanded us to follow them in their statements

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When they saw that, they all stood up, sacrificed, and shaved the heads of one another, so much so that they almost killed each other." This is narrated in al-Bukhārī. (*B*)

[151] This was narrated by al-Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ* from al-ʿIrbāḍ b. Sāriya who said: "Once, after the afternoon prayer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a powerful sermon that caused the eyes to tear up and the hearts to shake. A man said: 'This seems to be a farewell address, so what do you counsel us with, O Messenger of Allah?' He said: 'I counsel you to have fear of Allah and to hear and obey [your leader] even if he is an Ethiopian slave, for whoever shall live among you shall most certainly see much differing. Beware of newly inaugurated matters, for they are misguidance. Whoever among you lives to see that, see to it that you stick to my Sunna and the Sunna of the rightly guided and upright Caliphs. Stick to them with your molars.'" Abū ʿĪsā [al-Tirmidhī] said this is a rigorously authentic Hadith. It has also been narrated by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak*, al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan*, al-Bayhaqī in his *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, and al-Dārimī in his *Sunan*. (*F*)

and actions, yet Allah does not command the unlawful or detestable. If the transformation of concealment into obedience for them is proven false, it follows that they عليهم السلام cannot conceal. If concealment by the Messengers عليهم السلام is proven to be false, it is necessary that they convey, which is sought here. The proof that is it necessary for them عليهم السلام to convey is contained in the Book, the Sunna, and the consensus. As for the Book, the Exalted said: ﴿*Today I have completed for you your religion*﴾ [al-Māʾida: 3], and He said: ﴿*The right course has become clear from the wrong*﴾ [al-Baqara: 256], and He said: ﴿*So leave them for you are not to be blamed.*﴾ [al-Dhāriyāt: 54]. As for the Sunna, the Prophet ﷺ asked [his Companions]: "Have I conveyed the message?" and they replied: "Yes." He said: "O Allah, bear witness! Let the one present inform the one absent, for how many recipient understands more than the one who hears directly."[152] The Salaf were in unanimous agreement that the Prophets ﵈ did not conceal anything they were ordered to convey to the creation, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

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[152] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī in his rigorously authentic collection from Muhammad b. Sīrīn who said: "ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abū Bakra related to us from Abū Bakra, and a better person is ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ḥumayd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān [who related it from] Abū Bakra who said: 'The Prophet ﷺ delivered a speech on the day of sacrifice. He said: "Do you know what day it is?" We said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He remained silent till the point where we thought that he was going to give it a different name. He then said: "Is this not the day of sacrifice?" We replied: "Of course." He then said: "What month is this?" We replied: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He remained silent till the point where we thought that he was going to give it a different name. He then said: "Is this not the month of Dhū al-Ḥijja?" We replied: "Of course." He then asked: "What city is this?" We replied: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He remained silent till the point where we thought that he was going to give it a different name. He then said: "Is this not the Sacred City?" We replied: "Of course." He then said: "Indeed, your blood and wealth are inviolable, just like the inviolability of this day of yours and this month of yours and this city of yours, until the day you all meet your Lord. Have I conveyed the message?" They replied: "Yes." He said: "O Allah, bear witness! Let the one present inform the one absent, for how many a receiver understands more than the one who hears directly. So do not turn back as disbelievers after me by striking the necks of one another."'" This was also narrated from Ibn ʿUmar and relayed by al-Nasāʾī in *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*. It was also narrated

5.4.4 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT INTELLIGENCE AND SAGACITY ARE NECESSARY FOR THEM ﵈

Intelligence is having a sharp mind. It is not permissible for the Messengers ﵈ to be dolts, simpletons, or fools, because they have been sent to establish evidence and counter the doubts of the argumentative opponents. That cannot be achieved by a dolt, simpleton, or a fool. Furthermore, we have also been ordered to follow them in their statements and actions, and the one who is followed cannot be a dolt because that is an attribute of imperfection that detracts from his noble station.

5.4.5 THE RATIONAL PROOF THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR THE MESSENGERS ﵈ TO POSSESS INCIDENTAL QUALITIES

The permissible incidental qualities [accidents—*aʿrāḍ*] are those that do not detract from their lofty station. The proof of their permissibility is the fact that they occurred from them ﵈. Whoever was in their time saw their incidental qualities, and whoever was not in their time learned of them through mass-transmitted [*mutawātir*] reports. The upshot of this is the occurrence of incidental human qualities has been witnessed from them at times, and not been witnessed at other times. Something of that nature is considered permissible. If the negation of incidental qualities [from them] is proven to be false, it also follows that it cannot be impermissible. If its impermissibility is proven false, it is necessary that incidental qualities are permissible, which is sought here.

This is proven by the Book, the Sunna, and the consensus. The Exalted said: ﴾*They said: "Who is this Messenger that eats food and walks in the markets?"*﴿ [al-Furqān: 7] and He said: ﴾*And We have not sent any Messengers before you except that they would eat food and walk in the markets.*﴿ [al-Furqān: 2]. As for the Sunna, it is

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by al-Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak* and al-Ṭabarānī in [*al-Muʿjam*] *al-Kabīr* from Ibn ʿUmar as well. This expression is well known in the books of *Sunan*. (*F*) authentically reported that the Prophet ﷺ and the other Prophets—peace and blessings be upon them—would eat, drink, sleep, marry, divorce, buy, and sell. He ﷺ said: "As for me, by Allah, I fear Allah the most among you and I am the most conscientious of Him among you, but I fast and break my fast, I pray and sleep, and I marry women. Whoever seeks a way other than my Sunna is not from me."[153] The Umma is in unanimous agreement upon this.

5.4.6 THE BENEFITS OF THE MESSENGERS ؑ POSSESSING INCIDENTAL QUALITIES

[Some of these benefits include the] multiplication of reward: That is to say, the abundant rewards they ؑ shall receive for the problems, changes, and pains that befell their bodies and drinking from the cups of death. The Prophet ﷺ fell sick and ill and experienced bitter cold, hunger, and thirst—and much greater things befell the previous Prophets ؑ. All of these incidental occurrences befell them and they patiently endured them. They ؑ were the most severely tried of people. He ﷺ said: "We, the assembly of Prophets, experience increased pain in order to receive an increase in reward."[154] These incidental qualities are upon their outward selves; their inward selves do not experience any of that. If they عليهم السلام were protected from

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[153] This was narrated by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* collection from Ḥumayd b. Abī Ḥumayd al-Ṭawīl who said that he heard Anas b. Mālik ؓ say: "A group of three people went to the houses of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ asking about his acts of devotion. When they were told of them, it appeared that they had deemed them as being too few. 'What is our position,' they said, 'when compared to that of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ whose sins, past and future, have been forgiven?' One of them said: 'I shall pray all night!' Another said: 'I shall fast every day without exception!' Another said: 'I shall shun women and I will never marry!' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ appeared and said: 'Are you the ones who said these things? By Allah, I fear Allah more than any of you, and am more conscious of Him; but sometimes I fast and sometimes I eat; and sometimes I pray and sometimes I sleep; and I marry women—and whoever desires other than my example is not from me.'"

This was also narrated by al-Nasāʾī in *al-Kubrā*, al-Mujtabā, ʿAbd b. Ḥumayd in *al-Muntakhab*, al-Bayhaqī in *al-Kubrā*, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*.

[154] This was narrated by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *Kitāb al-Maraḍ wal-Kaffārāt* from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī ؓ who said: "I went to see the Prophet ﷺ

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when he was sick; I placed my hand above the water cloth and felt the heat of his fever and said: 'How hot is your fever O Messenger of Allah!' He said: 'We, the assembly of Prophets, experience increased pain in order to have an increase in reward.' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Who experiences the most tribulations?' He replied: 'The Prophets.' I then asked: 'And then who?' He replied: 'Then the righteous; one of them will be so severely tried with poverty that he will find nothing but an over garment to wear and cover himself with, and another of them will be tried with lice to the point that the lice will kill him, and that will be more beloved to them than receiving [from others].'" This was also narrated by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* from 'Aṭā' b. Yassār from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه who said: "I went to see the Prophet ﷺ when he was sick; I placed my hand above the water cloth and felt the heat of his fever and said: 'How hot is your fever, O Messenger of Allah!' He ﷺ said: 'We, the assembly of Prophets, experience increased pain in order to have an increase in reward.' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Who experiences the most tribulations?' He ﷺ replied: 'The Prophets.' I then asked: 'And then who?' He ﷺ replied: 'Then the righteous; one of them will be so severely tried with poverty that he will find nothing but an over-garment to wear and cover himself with, and another of them will be so severely tried with lice to the point that the lice will kill him, and that will be more beloved to them than receiving from you.'" This is a rigorously authentic report based on the conditions of Muslim, though neither [he nor al-Bukhārī] narrated it. (*F*)

Imam al-Qushayrī said: "Not everyone is fit for receiving tribulation; it is for the saints, thus those who are foreign to it should be left alone to go their own way. It was reported that the Prophet ﷺ once wanted to marry a particular woman, and it was said to him: 'She has never been sick,' whereupon he decided against it. It has been reported that 'Ammār b. Yāsir once married a woman who had never fallen sick, so he divorced her." (*B*)

You should know that being subjected to these difficulties is fitting for the Prophets and saints, and that is in accordance with their role which Allah has ordered them to carry out. For certain, they must deal with the burden, annoyance, and the inconveniences of the common people, and that entails a great reward. This is the state of all who rise up to fulfil this role. It is a serious matter and it contains a penetrating, intense effect. Whoever fits this description will most certainly encounter those who oppose him and object to him, so take counsel in this. (*F*) sleep—which is the least of inward incidental qualities—then what say you about other things?

[Another benefit is] legislation, that is, to educate others. We know the rulings related to prayer because of the forgetfulness that happened to him ﷺ, we also know how to perform the prayer during times of sickness because of his actions ﷺ.

[Another benefit is] solace. In other words, observing patience and experiencing comfort and delight when the worldly things are lost. So if they عليهم السلام experienced difficulties despite being the noblest of Allah's creation, lesser humans are even more prone to suffer, in which case they can take solace in the example of the Messengers' عليهم السلام attitude toward the world.

[Another benefit is] counsel regarding the paltriness of the world in the sight of Allah. When intelligent people learn what the Prophets—peace and blessings be upon them—faced in this world, it becomes decisively clear to them that the world's value is paltry and base in the sight of Allah. If it had any value whatsoever He would have given it to the esteemed and noble ones and prevented it from the corrupt and blameworthy.[155]

Considering the states of severity and difficulty experienced by the Prophets, Allah is not pleased to make this world the abode of His reward.

NOTICE

You should know that the Prophet ﷺ and the other Prophets abandoned the world[156] and observed renunciation. The mountains offered to turn themselves into gold yet the Prophet ﷺ refused. It should not, however, be said that the Prophet ﷺ was poor or indigent. Saying such a thing is punishable by death—and this applies to the other Prophets as well, peace and blessings be upon them all.

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[155] The Prophet ﷺ said: "If the world's value was equal to a gnat's wing in the sight of Allah, He would not have given a sip of drink to a disbeliever." Speaking to Ibn 'Umar (and directed to everyone else as well) he ﷺ said: "Be in the world as if you are a stranger or a wayfarer." Al-Tirmidhī added in his version: "and count yourself among the inhabitants of the grave." (*B*)

The first report was narrated by Ibn Mājah and al-Tirmidhī. Al-Tirmidhī said that it is an authentic [*ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*] narration. The second report was narrated by al-Bukhārī and Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and al-Tirmidhī with the addition: "and count yourself among the inhabitants of the grave." (*F*)

[156] You should know that the condemnation of the world is directed to the world insomuch as it distracts one from Allah, the Exalted. That is

NOTICE

The meaning of mass-transmission is a report mentioned by a group [so large] that it is normally impossible for them to all come together upon a lie. A mass transmitted report can only be about something sensed and not something understood.

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the understanding of the Hadith: "The world is cursed and that which is in it is cursed, save the remembrance of Allah and that which comes after it." In other words [what comes after it] such as: glorification, praise, and declarations of Allah's oneness. The aspect of the world that does not distract the believer is not condemned; rather, it is praiseworthy. And that is the understanding of the other Hadith: "How good is the world as a resting place for the believer! By it, he reaches good, and by it, he is delivered from evil!" From this you come to know that it [the world] is not condemned in and of itself, just as it is not praised in and of itself. (*B*)

The Hadith: "The world is cursed..." was narrated by Ibn Mājah, al-Bayhaqī, and al-Tirmidhī, who said that it is an authentic Hadith. The Hadith in full reads: "The world is cursed and that which is in it is cursed, save the remembrance of Allah and that which comes after it, and the scholar and learner." (*F*)

لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

CHAPTER VI

6.0 How the Meanings of this Doctrine are Contained within the Meaning of the Two Testimonies: *There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*

Whoever comprehends this section will gain both a detailed and general understanding of the doctrines of faith. The testimony of *There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah* gathers the meanings of all of the aforementioned doctrines. The meaning of this statement is a comprehensive summary of doctrine. It is a must that one understands the meaning of *There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*, because he who fails to understand this statement will be unable to benefit from it. Its meaning entails believing in the oneness of Allah and believing in the message given to His Messenger ﷺ: believing that Allah is One and without partner and that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.

The phrase of Divine oneness [*tawḥīd*] entails an affirmation of divinity [*ulūhiyya*] for Allah alone, and negating it from everything besides Him. What is negated [in this phrase] is divinity from every particular except our Master, the Sublime and Majestic. It is neither rationally nor legally possible to find that reality with any other,[157] because both the Divine texts and the intellect have proven that the true God is Allah alone—the One whose existence is necessary and the One who deserves all forms of worship. The worship of other than Him is false and is considered disbelief. Here we shall explain how this statement gathers the meanings of all the previous points of doctrine.

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[157] It is obligatory upon the legally responsible person to note that it is not sufficient to merely affirm Godhood for Allah, the Exalted; rather, it must be realized that it is impossible to affirm the meaning of Godhood for other than Him. (*F*)

6.1 SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The meaning of divinity[158] is for the true God to be independent and free of need from everything, while everything besides Him is in need of Him. This is the concomitant [*istilzām*] meaning of divinity. Without doubt, being free of need [from others] and for others to be in need implies all of the points of doctrine as we shall explain. The meaning of divinity by correspondence [*muṭābaqa*][159] is an expression expressing the Necessary Existence and the right to be worshipped. The meaning of god [*ilāh*] is universal. By rational and legal proofs it is restricted to One, and undoubtedly it is unique for Allah, the Exalted.

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[158] "Some have objected to Imam al-Sanūsī's explanation for the word "divinity," arguing that the well known meaning of it is that God is worshipped in truth. That, of course, implies that He is free of need from everything besides Him, so if the meaning of god is as he [the objector] mentioned, the meaning of the phrase *There is no god but Allah*' is *There is nothing that is worshipped in truth but Allah*. That implies that there is no one free from needing anything besides Him. The author, therefore, chose the explanation via implication because the meanings of doctrine fit under it more obviously than the meaning via concomitance [*muṭābaqa*]. This dispels the notions of some of the misguided sects who argue that the author did not know the meaning of the word—claiming that had he known it, he would not have explained it as he did."—Taken from al-Bājūrī with slight editing. (*F*)

You should know that the concomitant meaning of divinity is not as al-Bājūrī mentioned here; rather, it is as we mentioned above in the main text. Its concomitant meaning is the necessary existence, because Allah was God before He was worshipped by anyone of His creation. So the fact that He is worshipped in truth—or any similar meaning—is only an implication of Him being the One whose existence is necessary, which in turn implies that everything is in need of Him, which itself entails that everything besides Him is a possible existence. Based on this meaning, the explanation of the testimony of Divine oneness is *There is no one whose existence is necessary but Allah, the Exalted,* and this meaning clearly entails all of the tenets of faith. (*F*)

[159] Notice that the fact that He alone deserves to be worshipped is an implication of Him, the Exalted, being the One whose existence is necessary. That He is the One whose existence is necessary is the basis, and that He deserves to be worshipped is the branch. (*F*)

Based on this, the meaning of *There is no god but Allah* is *There is no one free from needing [mustaghnī] anything besides Him, while everything besides Allah, the Exalted, is in need of Him*, or it means *There is no god whose existence is necessary and who deserves to be worshipped besides Allah, the Exalted.* He is the true God whose existence is necessary and who deserves to be worshipped.

As for the points of doctrine that fall under this self-sufficiency, it is intrinsic and eternal self-sufficiency for Him, the Sublime and Majestic, in which He is free of needing all besides Him. His self-sufficiency implies that His existence is necessary, for if His existence were merely permissible He would have needed an originator, and that need negates self-sufficiency. It is impossible to negate self-sufficiency from Him, the Exalted, because it has been established for Him both rationally and textually. The Exalted said: ﴾*O mankind! You are all poor unto Allah and Allah is free of all needs and worthy of all praise.*﴿ [al-Fāṭir: 15]. As for the rational proof, it is the proof we presented for self-subsistence [*qiyām bil-nafs*].

NOTICE

The meaning of "Sublime" is His Divine transcendence above all imperfections. The meaning of "Majestic" is His unique possession of all perfections.

His self-sufficiency necessitates His beginninglessness. In other words, it necessitates a negation of prior non-existence. Were He not Pre-eternal He would have been contingent, and were He contingent He would have needed an originator, and that negates self-sufficiency. Negating self-sufficiency is impossible because it has been affirmed both rationally and textually.

His self-sufficiency necessitates His endlessness [*baqāʾ*], which is an expression that indicates a negation of future non-existence. If it were possible for Him to come into non-existence His existence would only be permissible, and he whose existence is permissible can only be contingent, and that would entail that He is in need of an originator—which would in turn negate self-sufficiency from Him. Negating self-sufficiency from Him, the Exalted, is impossible because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually.

His self-sufficiency necessitates His absolute dissimilarity from all contingent beings. In other words, it negates any likeness between Him and contingent beings in His Entity, His attributes, and His actions. If He resembled anything from them [contingent beings] He would have been contingent like them and thus in need of an originator. Being in need negates self-sufficiency and negating self-sufficiency from Allah is impossible because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually.

His self-sufficiency necessitates His self-subsistence which entails being free from needing a locus or a determiner. Had He been in need of a locus or a determiner, He would not be self-sufficient. Negating self-sufficiency from Allah, the Exalted, is impossible because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually. It shouldn't be said that self-subsistence means the same as self-sufficiency, for how can something be proven with itself? We say that self-subsistence is only exclusive to being free of needing a locus or a determiner. His self-sufficiency and freedom from needing all else besides Him is more general and inclusive, and using the general and inclusive to prove the specific and exclusive is correct here.

His self-sufficiency necessitates His Divine transcendence above imperfections, which are lowly qualities. Were He not divinely transcendent above them He would be attributed with them and thus in need of one who can remove them from Him. Being in need negates self-sufficiency and negating self-sufficiency from Allah is impossible because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually. Included in the obligation of declaring His Divine transcendence above imperfections is the affirmation of hearing, sight, and speech for Him, the Exalted, and the obligation of affirming that He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing, and that He speaks. The existence of qualitative attributes necessitates the existence of predicative attributes.

Notice here that there are eleven necessary attributes that are subsumed under the meaning of self-sufficiency. One of them is self-signifying, which is the attribute of existence. Four are negating attributes: pre-eternality, endlessness, absolute dissimilarity from contingent beings, and self-subsistence. Three are qualitative attributes: hearing, sight, and speech; and three are predicative: that He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing, and Speaking.

If these attributes are affirmed all of their opposites are negated, and they are also eleven attributes. If these eleven attributes were not necessary for Him, and were their opposites not negated, He would be in need of an originator. The proof establishing the necessity of existence, pre-eternality, endlessness, absolute dissimilarity from contingent beings, and one of the meanings of self-subsistence (which is being free from needing a determiner) is that if these attributes were negated He would be in need of an originator. It is impossible for Him to be in need because it is rationally and textually established that He, the Exalted, is self-sufficient. If He was in need of a locus—the negation of which is the second meaning of self-subsistence—He would be in need of one, and being in need negates self-sufficiency. It is impossible to negate self-sufficiency from Him, the Exalted, because it is both rationally and textually necessary. If it were [possible to negate self-sufficiency] He would be in need of one who can remove imperfections from Him. This proof establishes the necessity of declaring His Divine transcendence above imperfections. An example of imperfections are the opposites of hearing, sight, and speech. Were He not divinely transcendent above their opposites He would be in need of one who can remove those imperfections. Being in need negates self-sufficiency and negating self-sufficiency from Allah is impossible because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually.

It follows from the necessity of His self-sufficiency, the Sublime and Majestic, that He is divinely transcendent above motives for His actions and judgments. The word "motives" [*aghrāḍ*] is the plural of *motive* [*gharaḍ*] which is the incentive to look after what is advantageous and avert harms.[160] His actions include bringing into being, bringing into non-being, honouring, abasing, impoverishing, bringing life, and bringing death. His judgments are the five legal judgments in the Sacred Law. If it were permissible that He *not* be divinely transcendent above motives in His actions and judgments, it would follow that He is in need of that which will fulfil His motive. We observe that all who have a motive for something need that which will fulfil their motive. Were Allah in need it would negate His self-sufficiency, yet self-sufficiency is established for Him, the Exalted, both rationally and textually, so how can it be conceived that He, the Exalted, is in need, when He is free from needing all things?

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[160] It is the same whether you argued that the benefit is for Allah, the Exalted and Transcendent, or that it is for the creation: it is impossible for there to be any incentive for Allah. The benefits for the servants come only from His command and prohibition. (*F*)

It follows from His self-sufficiency that it is not incumbent upon Him to do any contingently possible thing, be it the act of bringing into existence, bringing into non-existence,[161] or leaving it. Were it incumbent upon Him to do anything from the contingent possibilities, such as the act of granting reward, looking after what is of benefit and most advantageous [*al-ṣalāḥ wal-aṣlaḥ*], and sending the Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them—He, the Sublime and Majestic, would have been in need of those things in order to complete Himself with them. Hence, it follows that nothing is incumbent upon Him save that which is a completion for Him, however it is impossible for Him to be in need. How can He be in need when He is self-sufficient and free of needing anything? If it is proven that nothing is incumbent upon Him it follows necessarily that either doing or leaving something is possible for Him, the Exalted.

6.2. LIFE

All of this is an explanation of how the entire doctrine fits under self-sufficiency. As for all others besides Him being in need of Him, it rationally necessitates that He, the Exalted, is Living. Were He not described with life, nothing would be in need of Him, because one who is dead cannot bring anything into existence and nothing stands in need of him. It is impossible to negate [that everything is in] need of Him, the Exalted, because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually.

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[161] The nature of something obligatory is that it brings about completion when it is done. An example of this is the five daily prayers. Since they are obligatory upon man, when he performs them he is completed by them, which entails that he is in need of them. (*T*)

Based on this you realize why *Ahl al-Sunna* negate that anything is obligatory upon Allah, the Exalted. (*F*)

Textually, it is found in His statement: ❬*O mankind! You are all poor unto Allah.*❭ [ibid: 15]. Rationally, it is found in the proof for oneness because it proves that there is no other god besides Him.

6.3 OMNIPOTENCE

That all others besides Him are in need of Him necessitates that the linkage of His omnipotence is general and that it is linked with all contingent possibilities. If He did not posses omnipotence with a general linkage He would have been described with incapability, and were He incapable, nothing would be in need of Him.

6.4 WILL

That all others besides Him are in need of Him necessitates that He possesses will that is linked with all contingent possibilities. If He did not possess will with a general linkage He would have been described with detesting [*karāha*]. Were He to detest, nothing would be in need of Him. It is impossible to negate [that everything is in] need of Him, the Exalted, because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually.

6.5 KNOWLEDGE

That all others besides Him are in need of Him necessitates that He, the Exalted, possesses knowledge that is linked with all that is known. Were He to be described with ignorance, nothing would be in need of Him.

It is impossible to negate [that everything is in] need of Him, the Exalted, because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually.

The affirmation of these attributes implies the affirmation of the predicative attributes, namely, that He is All-Powerful, Willing, and All-Knowing. If any of these attributes were negated or any of their implications, or if all of them were negated, it would not be possible for any contingent thing to exist. The reason for this is that it is impossible for something to exist if it is conditioned without a conditioner [*al-mutawaqqif bi-dūn al-mutawaqqaf 'alayhi*]. It would follow from this that nothing is therefore dependent upon Him, because the reason for dependence is possibility and contingence. If any of these attributes were negated nothing would be in need of Him, but how can it be conceived that nothing is dependent on Him, the Sublime and Majestic, when everything besides Him is in need of Him, firstly in order to be brought into existence, and secondly to receive sustenance?

6.6 ONENESS

That all others besides Him are in need of Him necessitates that He, the Sublime and Majestic, is described with oneness in divinity. Were there a second being sharing in divinity, nothing would be in need of Him [Allah] because of the inability of both in that scenario—meaning in the case of their assumed co-existence. Inability would apply to both of them whether they were in agreement, disagreement, or if they each took their own share. The belief that nothing is in need of Him is false, as explained earlier, and how can it be when He, the Sublime and Majestic, is the One whom all others need forever?

It follows from this need that the universe in its entirety is contingent. If anything from it was eternal, its existence would be necessary and it would be free from needing Him, the Exalted, for its existence, and it would imply the acquisition of what is already acquired [*taḥṣīl al-ḥāṣil*], and that is impossible. That He, the Exalted cannot be described with previous or future non-existence is a proof that He is free from needing a determiner. Such a determiner would be free of needing Him, the Exalted, and that is impossible because if some [part of the universe] was self-sufficient all of it would be self-sufficient due to the likeness [between the part and the whole]. It is impossible for any of the contingently possible things to be self-sufficient from Him, the Exalted, because everything must be dependent on Him. How can it be rationally conceived that anything besides Him can be self-sufficient, when it is rationally and textually necessary for all others besides Him to be in need of Him?

NOTICE

You should know that, according to the consensus, anyone who believes in the eternality of anything in the universe or its endlessness—meaning its independent endlessness—or doubts about the matter, is considered a disbeliever.

It follows from this need that all have unto Him, the Sublime and Majestic, that no existent has any independent effect in bringing things into existence or non-existence, no matter what it may be and not matter how small.[162] Fire, therefore, has no

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[162] Concerning the issue of independent effect, there are four groups:
[1] Those who believe that the fire and the knife, for example, contain independent effect by their nature. There is no dispute regarding the disbelief of this group.
[2] Those who believe that the fire and the knife, for example, contain effect due to a power that Allah has deposited within them. There is a difference of opinion regarding the disbelief of this group. The most correct view is that they are not disbelievers, as was said regarding the *Mu'tazila* who believed that the servant creates his own voluntary actions due a power that Allah has deposited within him.
[3] Those who believe that there is no independent effect for anything but Allah, the Exalted, yet at the same time believe that there is a rational and inherent link between the fire and the knife, on one hand, and their subsequent effects, on the other. Those who believe this are not disbelievers; however, such a belief might push them to disbelief because it leads to the denial of the breaks in natural phenomena such as the inimitable miracles of the Prophets—peace and blessings be upon them—and the resurrection of bodies.
[4] Those who believe that there is no independent effect for anything but Allah and that it is valid and possible for there to be a cause with no subsequent effect. This is the saved group, Allah willing.

The correct belief is that none of these things possess independent effect and that it is possible that there be a cause with no subsequent effect. It is possible that fire exists without combustion, as occurred with our liege lord Ibrāhīm ﷷ when he was thrown from the catapult and Allah, the Exalted, protected him from it [the fire]. In that state, Jibrīl ﷷ came to him and asked: "Do you have any need?" to which he replied: "As for having any need of you, no." He [Jibrīl ﷷ] ordered him to call upon Allah, the Exalted, to which he said: "His [Allah's] knowledge of my condition suffices me from asking." The only reason he said that was because of the overpowering of the Divine reality [*ḥaqīqa*] upon him, for it does not negate the legality of supplication, as is found in many places in the Book and the Sunna.

To explain this further, we say it is possible for someone who has been chosen by Allah, the Exalted, to be overcome by the Divine reality, thereby sufficing himself with Allah's knowledge from supplication or anything else. It is also possible for one [chosen by Allah] to be overcome by the Sacred Law [Shariah], thereby supplicating to Him. It is effect in combustion; food has no effect in satiety; and water has no effect in quenching thirst; and the same is said for any other conventional cause. If anything from the conventional causes—or anything else—possessed independent effect, it would entail that it was independent from our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, while at the same time having a need for that thing it affected. This is impossible because if some were independent it would follow that all were independent from our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, and that negates dependence upon Allah, the Exalted. It is impossible to negate [that everything is in] need of Him, the Exalted, because it has been affirmed for Him both rationally and textually. How can it be conceived [that others] are self-sufficient when all are forever in need of Him, the Sublime and Majestic, in a general sense that includes all beings in all states[163] and attributes, whether substances,

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possible that a knife exists [being used to cut] without cutting, as is found in the story of Ismāʿīl: based on the view that his father passed the knife across his neck, even though the correct view is that he [his father] only thought to do that. (*B*)

[163] "In all states...," in other words, in the state of being and non-being. The contingent being is dependent upon Him, the Exalted, in both states. As for the state of non-being, it is because it is in need of Him to bring it into being. As for the state of being, it is because if we said that an accident does not remain for two instances of time, that contingent being is in need of Him, the Exalted, to sustain its essence with accidents that, without their continued renewal, it would be taken out of existence. If we say that an accident remains for two instances of time or more—which is the correct view—then that contingent being is also in need of Him, the Exalted, for its continued existence, and this is based upon the preferred view that the basis for the contingent being's dependence and need is its own contingent possibility. In other words, existence and non-existence are both equal considering its essence because this description is inseparable from it, so it is completely dependent upon Him, the Exalted, in every moment to keep it in existence.

With regard to the less preferred view that the basis for the contingent being's dependence and need is its contingency—which refers to existence after non-existence—it is not necessarily dependent upon Him, the Exalted, for its continued existence. This description—meaning accidents, or anything else (assuming that the world contains that which is neither a substance nor an accident—as the philosophers claim)?

NOTICE

If you assume that a being brings about effect by its nature and essence, the falsehood of that is inferred from the argument of dependence. If, on the other hand, you assume that it brings about effect due to a power that Allah has deposited within it —which is a belief followed by many of the philosophers —the falsehood of that is inferred from the argument of self-sufficiency.

NOTICE

There is no difference of opinion regarding the disbelief of the one who believes that causes bring about their associated effects innately or through independent causation. Whoever believes that the causes bring about their effects due to a power that Allah has deposited within them is an innovating reprobate. There are two views regarding the disbelief of such a person, and the most correct view is that he is an innovating reprobate. As for the one who believes that they neither possess effect by their innate nature nor due to a power that Allah has deposited within them,

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existence after non-existence—has already been obtained, so if it needed it after having obtained it, this would imply the acquisition of what is already acquired. (*B*)

The view that holds contingency as the basis for a contingent being's dependence is extremely weak, if it means that the reason for a contingent being's dependence in itself is its own contingency. This is because contingency is additional to the essence of something, and it is absurd for it to be the basis for something's dependence in itself. The correct position is to say that the reason for something's dependence in itself is its own inherent possibility [*imkān*]. It has occurred to me that to understand the second view to mean that the reason we know that something is dependent is because we know its contingency. As you see, if explained in this way, their statement would be very close to the truth and would not contradict the view of those who said that the reason for something's dependence in itself is its own inherent possibility. Contemplate this well. (*F*) yet claims that there is a rational and inherent link that cannot be absent, then he is ignorant regarding the reality of empirical judgment, and his ignorance might push him to disbelief by denying things like the inimitable miracles of the Prophets and the resurrection—because all of these things are breaks in natural phenomena and go against what is customary. As for the one who believes that the causes do not produce effect innately, or through a power that Allah has deposited within them, and says that the link between them and their effects is only conventional and may be absent, then he is the believer who has realized faith and he will, by the bounty of Allah, be saved from the destructive pit-falls in this life and the Next.

NOTICE

It is rationally impossible for something to bring an effect via a power that Allah has deposited within it. If that were true [that it is rationally possible], then in order for our Master to bring about some actions, He would need the intermediary of that power. This is false, for it is known that He, the Sublime and Majestic, must be self-sufficient and free of needing anything. This belief would entail that His will and omnipotence have undergone specification in order for something to *not* be included in their linkage, and this entails imperfection, which is impossible.

With this it has become clear to you how the statement *There is no god but Allah*, includes the three categories that every legally responsible person must know, believe in with proof, and attach to his heart: the three categories as applied to our Master, the Sublime and Majestic: the necessary, possible, and impossible.

6.7 MUHAMMAD ﷺ IS THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

We shall now clarify what is contained in the statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*. This statement of ours, *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*, entails belief in all of the Prophets عليهم السلام; it includes belief in their existence and that they are from the servants of Allah whom He, the Exalted, chose with this unrivaled rank, and includes belief that they are divinely protected from minor sins and enormities. The first of them was our liege lord Adam and the last of them was our liege lord Muhammad ﷺ by whom Allah sealed prophecy, as He, the

Exalted, said: ﴾*And the seal of the Prophets.*﴿ [al-Aḥzāb: 40]. May peace and blessings be upon all of them.[164] It is obligatory to revere and respect them, and there is unanimous agreement that belittling any of them—without repenting—is punishable by death as a consequence of disbelief. According to the Mālikīs, if such a person repents he is still sentenced to death as a prescribed punishment [*ḥadd*].

It is necessary to have detailed faith in those whose names are mentioned in the Book and the Sunna,[165] such as Muhammad, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, ʿĪsā, Ayyūb, Yaʿqūb, Yūsuf, and others عليهم السلام. It is necessary to have general faith in those who are not well-known by believing that everyone who is a Prophet in the knowledge of Allah is veracious. There is a disagreement regarding how many Prophets there were: is the exact number of Prophets and Messengers عليهم السلام known or not? It has been said that their exact number is unknown because Allah said: ﴾*Among them are those whose stories we have related to you and among them are those whose stories we have not related to you.*﴿ [al-Ghāfir: 78]. It has also been said that their exact number is known because of some narrations of the Hadith of Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه who said: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! What is the number of the Prophets and Messengers?' He ﷺ replied: 'One hundred and fourteen thousand

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[164] The Sacred Law of Muhammad ﷺ has abrogated all previous laws, as was explicitly stated in the verse: ﴾*And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter, he will be among the losers.*﴿ This verse does not accept any alternative interpretation, so faith in it is a must.

A GREAT BENEFIT

The best generation is the generation of the Companions, and it was one hundred and twenty years, starting from the initial sending [of the Prophet ﷺ], then followed by the generation of the followers that was for seventy years in which there were no Companions, and then the generation of the followers of the followers that lasted for thirty years. (Ṣ)

[165] The Qur'an has mentioned the names of twenty-five Prophets; whoever denies even one of them after knowing them is a disbeliever. (Ṣ)

Prophets.' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! How many Messengers were among them?' He ﷺ replied: 'Three hundred and thirteen—a large group.'"[166]

According to what was stated by Ibn ʿAṭiyya,[167] the possessors of strong resolve[168] among them were five: Muhammad, Nūḥ,

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[166] This was narrated by al-Bayhaqī in his *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* from Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه who said: "I went to see the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while he was in the Mosque. I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! What is the number of the Prophets and Messengers?' He ﷺ replied: 'One hundred and fourteen thousand Prophets.' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! How many Messengers were among them?' He ﷺ replied: 'Three hundred and thirteen—a large group.' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! How many Prophets were there?' He ﷺ replied: 'One hundred and twenty-four thousand Prophets.' I asked: 'How many Messengers were among them?' He ﷺ replied: 'Three hundred and thirteen.'" This was a lone narration of Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Saʿīdī and it was also narrated in *al-Mustadrak* of al-Ḥākim. (*F*)

[167] In *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, al-Bayhaqī narrated from Abū al-ʿĀliya: "The verse: ﴾*Be patient as the Messengers of strong will were patient*﴿ refers to Nūḥ, Hūd, and Ibrāhīm عليهم السلام. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was commanded to be patient as they were; they were three in number and he became the fourth. Nūḥ عليه السلام said: ﴾"*If my standing and reminding you of Allah's signs is difficult for you...*"﴿ and thereby manifested to them his separation. When Hūd's عليه السلام people said to him: ﴾"*We do not see you save as someone who seeks to belittle our gods*"﴿ he manifested to them his separation. When Ibrāhīm عليه السلام said [as was mentioned in the verse]: ﴾*You most certainly have a good example in Ibrāhīm when he said to his people*: "*O my people! I am innocent of that which you worship*"﴿ he manifested to them his separation, and while standing at the Kaʿba, Muhammad ﷺ said: ﴾"*Indeed, I have been forbidden from worshipping those whom you worship besides Allah...*"﴿ he manifested his separation, too. (*F*)

[168] Ibn ʿAṭiyya said in his exegesis of the chapter *al-Aḥqāf*, commenting on the words of the Exalted: ﴾*Be patient as the Messengers of strong will were patient*﴿: "This means those who exerted themselves with effort and severity with their people, such as Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, ʿĪsā, and others عليهم السلام. This is the view of ʿAṭāʾ al-Khurasānī and others. It has also been related from Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥakīm that he said: 'All of the Messengers عليهم السلام were the possessors of strong will except for Yūnus عليه السلام.'" For certain, there is no clear-cut and unequivocal proof identifying them specifically; however, the verified view is the one that is also stated in

Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, and ʿĪsā—may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all. In [al-Zamakhsharī's] *al-Kashhāf*, five more were added to that: Yaʿqūb, Isḥāq, Yūsuf, Dāwūd, and Ayyūb ﷺ.[169]

NOTICE

The correct position is that the one offered for sacrifice was Ismāʿīl. This was the position of al-Shāfiʿī and many scholars. Some scholars wrote:

The one offered for sacrifice was Ismāʿīl
As was articulated by the Book and Revelation
An honour given to our Prophet from God
And clarified in the exegesis and interpretation

6.8 THE ANGELS

Included in the statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah* is faith in all of the angels. Faith in them entails belief in their existence and the belief that they are honoured, that ﴿*they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them and they do as they are ordered,*﴾[170] that they are the envoys between Allah and His

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Ibn ʿAṭiyya's exegesis (5:107): "Of course, every Prophet and Messenger possessed strong will and patience." This is the view that must be upheld. (*F*)

[169] The scholars have differed about three people being Prophets or not: Luqmān, al-ʿAzīz, and Dhū al-Qarnayn. (*Ṣ*)

[170] They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them and they do as they are ordered. This is not negated by what has been related regarding Hārūt and Mārūt, because it is only cited by the historians from the Israelite traditions found in the books of the Jews and Christians. The scholars of Qur'anic exegesis have stated that there is no authentic report concerning it. The claim made by some historians that they were punished and physically altered is a lie and slander that cannot be believed. What must be believed in regarding the two [angels] is that they did not teach magic in order for it to be practiced, but rather to warn against it. The reason for this is that the ignorant folk thought that the inimitable miracles of the Prophets were magic, so Allah, the Exalted, sent them [the two angels] to teach people the way magic works so as to distinguish between the two. This of course, is all based upon

creation, who interact with them as He permitted them, and belief that they are truthful in what they inform and that they are so numerous that only Allah knows, as the Exalted said: ﴾*And none known the hosts of your Lord but He.*﴿ [al-Muddathir: 31]. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Heaven has moaned and it has every right to moan; there is no place within it the size of four fingers except that there is an angel placing its forehead on it, prostrating to Allah."[171]

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the assumption that they were two angels. It has also been stated that they were two righteous men who were called two *Malaks* (angels) due to their righteousness. (*B*)

You should know that some have said that it is possible for the angels to disobey Allah, the Exalted. Those who held this view relied upon the premise that Iblīs is from the angels. This is a very weak position—nay, it is false—because it contradicts the clear verse: ﴾*Except Iblīs; he was from the Jinn and was corrupted.*﴿ This is a clear text stating that Iblīs was not from the angels and that he was from the Jinn. We know that the Jinn are a different species from the angels and that they are not a part of them. There is no justification for those who claim that some angels are called Jinn, because there is no proof to back that up and it is against the apparent meaning. Contemplate this well. (*F*)

[171] This was narrated by al-Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ* from Abū Dharr ﷺ who said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'I see that which you do not see and I hear that which you do not hear. The Heaven has moaned and it has every right to moan; there is no place within it the size of four fingers except that there is an angel placing its forehead on it, prostrating to Allah. By Allah, if you all knew what I know, you would laugh less and cry more, and you would not take pleasure from women in the bed. You would have gone out to the plains pleading to Allah [and saying] "would that I was a bush to be chewed up."'" Abū 'Īsā [al-Tirmidhī] said that there is a similar report from Abū Hurayra, 'Ā'isha, Ibn 'Abbās, and Anas. He said that this report is *ḥasan gharīb* [a lower grade of *ḥasan*]. In other routes going to Abū Dharr, it is reported that he said: "Would that I was a bush to be chewed up."

Al-Ḥākim narrated in *al-Mustadrak* that Abū Dharr said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ read the verse: ﴾*Has there not come upon man a period in which he was not a thing* [*even*] *mentioned?*﴿ till the end of the chapter. He ﷺ then said: 'I see that which you do not see and I hear that which you do not hear. The Heaven has moaned, and it has every right to moan; there is no place within it the size of four fingers except that there is an angel placing its forehead on it, prostrating to Allah. By

NOTICE

His statement that heaven "moaned" means it squeaked and groaned from the heaviness of the angels crowded within it. Some have said that this is a figure of speech denoting the extremely large number of angels, and said that there is no actual moaning. Some of the verifying scholars said that the first view is more appropriate because it is permissible for Allah to create comprehension and a sound within it.

It is necessary to have detailed faith in those angels whose names are mentioned in the Book and the Sunna, such as: Jibrīl, Mīkā'īl, Isrāfīl, the Angel of Death,[172] Mālik, Riḍwān, Munkar, Nakīr, Raqīb, and 'Atīd عليهم السلام. Jibrīl is the bringer of revelation to the Prophets عليهم السلام; Isrāfīl is entrusted with the spirit and blowing the trumpet; Mīkā'īl is entrusted with provisions, the rain, and the seas; the Angel of Death is entrusted with taking the souls; Raqīb is the angel who writes the good deeds; 'Atīd is the angel who writes the bad deeds; Riḍwān is the gate keeper of Paradise; Mālik is the gate keeper of Hell; and Munkar and Nakīr are entrusted with interrogating the dead. As for other angels besides these, it is necessary for the legally responsible person to have general faith in them by believing that every angel in the knowledge of Allah is true.

Insulting the angels is just like insulting the Prophets: insulting them is punishable by death.

Allah, if you all knew what I know, you would laugh less and cry more and you would not take pleasure from women in the bed. You would have gone out to the plains pleading to Allah [and saying] 'would that I was a bush to be chewed up.'" This report has a rigorously authentic chain and neither [al-Bukhārī nor Muslim] relayed it. It was also narrated by al-Bayhaqī in his *Sunan* from Abū Dharr as well with the wording: "there is no place within it the size of a finger except that there is an angel..." It was also narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*. (*F*)

[172] It is said that his name is 'Azrā'īl. Some, however, say that this name is not authentically reported so he cannot be given it. Others say that there are indeed some reports and that even if they are weak, it is enough in a matter such as this and there is no harm with it. (*F*)

6.9 THE REVEALED BOOKS

Included in the statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah* is having faith in the heavenly revealed books. Faith in them entails belief in their existence and the belief that they are the speech of Allah—in other words, indicating His pre-eternal speech that subsists with His Divine Entity—and that they contain what is real and truth sent to some of His Messengers ؑ. It is necessary to have detailed faith in four of them: the Qur'an that He revealed to our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Torah that He revealed to Prophet Mūsā ؑ, the Gospel that He revealed to Prophet ʿĪsā ؑ, and the Psalms that He revealed to Prophet Dāwūd ؑ. Faith in any other books besides these four is in a general sense, and none know their number but Allah, the Exalted.

NOTICE

Some scholars have said that generally speaking there are one hundred books: fifty revealed to Seth, thirty revealed to Idrīs, ten revealed to Ibrāhīm ؑ, and ten revealed to Mūsā ؑ before the Torah. The correct view is that we should abstain from enumerating them due to the disagreements in this matter. Apart from the four Books (in which it is necessary to have detailed knowledge and faith concerning them), it is incumbent upon the legally responsible person to believe in general that Allah revealed books from the heavens.

NOTICE

They are called heavenly revealed books because Jibrīl brought them from the direction of the heavens, for it is impossible for Allah to be in a direction.

6.10 THE LAST DAY

Included in the statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah* is having faith in the Last Day. Faith in it entails belief in it and what is included in it, such as the resurrection of the physical bodies (and not a likeness of them). The Exalted said: ﴾*As We began the first creation, We will repeat it. That is a promise binding on Us.*﴿ [al-Anbiyā': 104]. Its events include: the *Gathering*, in which the people will be driven to their standing places, each one driven according to his works in the world; the *Intercession* that all shall refuse to assume except the liege lord of mankind ﷺ who shall say: "I am for that, I am for that: my nation, my nation!"[173]

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[173] Many of the Hadith masters of this Umma have narrated this, among them Imam al-Bukhārī in his rigorously authentic collection. He said: "Ma'bad b. Hilāl al-'Anzī said: 'We gathered with some people from the inhabitants of Basra and went to Anas b. Mālik, and along with us was Thābit al-Banānī, who was to ask Anas on our behalf about the Hadith on the Intercession. We approached his compound, and lo and behold he was praying the forenoon prayer. Afterwards we sought his permission and he gave us permission to enter as he was sitting on a mattress. We said to Thābit: "Do not ask him about anything before asking about the Hadith of the Intercession." He said: "O Abū Ḥamza [Anas]! These are your brothers from the people of Basra. They have come to ask you regarding the Hadith on the Intercession." He [Anas] said: "Muhammad ﷺ relayed to us saying: 'On the Day of Resurrection, the people will surge with each other like waves and they will go to Adam and say: "Intercede for us with your Lord!" He will say: "I am not fit for that. Go to Ibrāhīm, for he is the intimate friend of the All-Merciful." They will then go to Ibrāhīm and he will say: "I am not fit for that. Go to Mūsā, for he is the one to whom Allah spoke." They will then go to Mūsā and he will say: "I am not fit for that. Go to 'Īsā, for he is the spirit of Allah and His word." They will then go to 'Īsā and he will say: "I am not fit for that. Go to Muhammad." They will come to me [the Messenger of Allah ﷺ] and I will say, "I am for that." Then I will ask for my Lord's permission, and it will be given, and then He will inspire me to praise Him with such praises as I do not know now. I will praise Him with those praises and I will fall down, prostrate before Him. Then it will be said, "O Muhammad, raise your head and speak, for you will be listened to; ask, for you will be granted; intercede, for your intercession will be accepted." I will say, "O Lord! My nation, my nation!" Then it will be said, "Go and take out of Hell all those who have faith in their hearts equal to the weight of a barley seed." I will go and do so and return to praise Him with the same praises and fall down prostrate before Him. Then it will be said, "O Muhammad, raise your head and speak, for you will be listened to; ask, for you will be granted; intercede, for your intercession will be accepted." I will say, "O Lord! My nation, my nation!" Then it will be said, "Go and take out of Hell all those who have faith in their hearts equal to the weight of an ant or mustard seed." I will go and do so and return to praise Him with the same praises and fall down in prostration before Him. It will be said, "O, Muhammad, raise your head and speak, for you will be listened to; ask, for you will be granted (your request);

He shall intercede in the judgment, which is called the greater intercession. Belief in the Last Day also entails belief in the *Scale*. The majority hold the view that what is weighed are the scrolls of deeds and that the scale is only one, belief in the Last Day also entails belief in *receiving the books*, meaning receiving the books of the good and bad deeds; and belief in the Pond and the Traverse that people shall cross.[174]

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and intercede, for your intercession will be accepted." I will say, "O Lord, my followers!" Then He will say, "Go and take out of it [Hell] all those who have faith in their hearts equal to the weight of the smallest of the smallest mustard seed." I will then go and do so, taking them out of the fire.'"

When we left Anas I said to some of my companions, "Let's pass by Al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] who is hiding himself in the house of Abū Khalīfa and request him to tell us what Anas b. Mālik has told us." We went to him and greeted him and he admitted us in. We said to him, "O Abū Sa'īd! We came to you from your brother Anas b. Mālik and he related to us a Hadith about the Intercession the like of which I have never heard." He said, "What is that?" We told him of the Hadith and said: "He stopped at this point [of the Hadith]." He said: "What then?" We said: "He did not add anything to that." He said: "Anas related this Hadith to me twenty years ago when he was young. I do not know whether he forgot or if he did not like for you to rely solely on what he might have said." We said, "O Abū Sa'īd! Inform us!" He smiled and said: "Man was created hasty. I did not mention it but that I wanted to inform you of it. Anas told me the same as he told you and said that the Prophet ﷺ added, 'I will then return for a fourth time and praise Him similarly and prostrate before Him. It will be said: "O Muhammad! Raise your head and speak, for you will be listened to; ask, for you will be granted; and intercede, for your intercession will be accepted." I will say: "O Lord! Allow me to intercede for anyone who said *There is no god but Allah*." Then Allah will say, "By My Power, and my Majesty, and by My Supremacy, and by My Greatness, I will take out of Hell whoever said *There is no god but Allah*."'"'"

This was narrated by al-Nasā'ī in his [*Sunan*] *al-Kubrā* from him, Ibn 'Abbās, 'Abdullāh b. 'Amr, and Abū Hurayra. Al-Ḥākim narrated it from Ibn 'Abbās, as did al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*. Al-Dārimī narrated it in his *Sunan* from Anas b. Mālik, as did Ibn Ḥibbān. Muslim narrated it from him, Abū Hurayra and 'Abdullāh b. 'Amr. Many others narrated this as well. (*F*)

[174] According to the correct view, even the disbelievers [shall cross it]. (*B*) Everyone shall cross it according to their works in this world—not

There are other details concerning these things that are found in the Book, the Sunna, and the books of the scholars.[175]

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according to their agility and balance, as is imagined by some ignorant folk. (*F*)

Al-Qarāfī—following the lead of al-ʿIzz [b. ʿAbd al-Salām]—verified that it [the Traverse] is wide and that it contains two paths: a right side and a left side, and that the people of felicity will take the right and the people of wretchedness will take the left. Some have stated that the more apparent view is that it—in addition to the actual crossing—is of varying degrees of narrowness and expansion, and is commensurate with the states of the people. The more preponderantly correct view is that it is thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword. Allah is capable of allowing them to pass even though it is like that. (*B*)

[175] The foundations of the beliefs transmitted via revelation [*samʿiyāt*] are four: belief in all of the Prophets, belief in the angels, belief in the Heavenly Books, and faith in the Last Day. In addition to this, there are other revelatory matters in which it is a legal obligation to have faith, such as: the Divine decree and foreordainment, the questioning in the grave and its delight and punishment, the gathering, resurrection, quickening, and account, the taking of the scrolls [the Books], the Scale, the Traverse, the Pond of the best of the Messengers ﷺ, the Intercession of our chosen Prophet and others who are chosen and with whom [Allah] is pleased.

It is also an obligation to have faith in the Paradise, the Fire, and their existence and that they are abodes of permanence for both the felicitous and wretched, and that the delights of Paradise include the large eyed Houris [*al-Ḥūr al-ʿĪn*], young servants, and the noblest and most tremendous delight: the Beatific Vision of the Creator, the Sublime and Majestic. It is also an obligation to have faith in the noble guarding and scribe angels—upon them be peace and blessings—the Angel of Death, our liege lord ʿAzrāʾīl ﵇, who takes all of the souls and is entrusted with bringing death in general (meaning causing everything in the universe to perish except that which has been excluded, such as the Throne, the Footstool, the Pen, Paradise, Hellfire, the tailbone, and the bodies of the Prophets and martyrs—peace and blessings be upon them).

It is also an obligation to believe in Iblīs, the accursed—may the curse of Allah, the angels, and all the people be upon him and all of his followers—and that he is the first one to disobey, reject, show envy, lie, and behave arrogantly. It is also an obligation to believe in the existence of the Jinn, who are the offspring of Iblīs, and from them are the devils, and among them is the believer and the disbeliever.

All of the aforementioned things are included in the statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*, because he ﷺ was sent by Allah to confirm all of these matters, which means that they are all true. He ﷺ was also sent to order us with faith in all of this. Whoever does not believe in even one of these things cannot be a believer, because faith consists of believing in six things: Allah, the Prophets, the angels, the Heavenly Books, the Last Day, and the Divine decree[176]—which entails belief that all that happens,

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One must also believe that our Prophet ﷺ is the best of creation and that he was taken on a miraculous night journey in a wakeful state with his body, that his Companions—may Allah be pleased with all of them—are the best of his nation, that his wife 'Ā'isha ؓ was innocent of the slanderous accusations levelled against her.

One must also believe in the descent of 'Īsā ؑ on the cusp of the last days and his killing of the Dajjāl, the disappearance and raising up of the Qur'an, the continued existence of souls, that death is foreordained, and that corruption does not remove faith.

It is also an obligation to believe in the life of the Prophets and martyrs—peace and blessings be upon them—in their graves in which they are provided for by their Lord. It is an obligation to affirm Divine protection and inimitable miracles for the Prophets and Messengers ؑ, miraculous gifts for the saints ؓ and affirm the benefit of supplication.

These are many revelatory matters and they are the most emphasized and most important matters that a legally responsible person must know and believe in, both in general and in detail, the particulars of which were mentioned in the section on knowing Allah, the Sublime and Majestic, and knowing His Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them. (*M*)

You should know that some of these matters mentioned by al-Mārghanī are differed over. This is known in the more detailed and lengthy works and the differences therein are mild, contrary to what some ignorant people imagine. (*F*)

[176] They have differed regarding the definition of decree [*qadr*]. The Ash'arīs said that it is Allah's bringing things into being according to His foreknowledge and will. According to them, it is an attribute of action and therefore contingent. The Māturīdīs said it is a pre-eternal demarcation [*taḥdīd*] of every created being and what is found within them of good and evil. According to them, it is the linkage of knowledge and will, from which follows that decree is eternal. One might posit that the difference between the two is only semantic; whoever looks at the manifestation of creation will say that it is contingent, and whoever

both good and bad, is by the will and power of Allah, just as His knowledge was linked with it before its existence.

6.11 BELIEF IN THE MESSENGERS ﵈

Included in our statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah* is the obligation to have faith in the truthfulness of the Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them. This means that their words are in agreement with reality. The linkage of *messenger* to Allah entails that they ﵈ must be truthful. It also follows from this that it is impossible for them to lie. It is legally obligatory to have faith in the messengership of those who are witnessed with countless inimitable miracles, because such miracles come to confirm their truthfulness. Were they ﵈ not truthful, they would not be trustworthy and faithful Messengers ﵈ of our Master, the Knower of all minute matters.[177]

Included in our statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah* is the belief that it is impossible for them to do any prohibited thing, be it unlawful or detested. This is impossible for all of the Prophets ﵈ because they were sent in order to teach their people with their statements, actions, and silence. If anyone did an action and the Messenger knew of it or was informed of it, and he remained silent and tacitly approved it without censure, we can infer from his silence that it is permissible, and that we are allowed to do it. If such a thing was within the realm of worship,

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looks at the linkage of beginningless effective knowledge and will shall say that it is eternal. In our comprehensive definition of it in which we unite the two views we say: It is Allah's bringing things into being according to His knowledge and will. The technical definition of ordainment [*qaḍā'*] has been defined by the Māturīdīs as an action with additional mastery/precision, and based on that, it is contingent. The Ash'arīs defined it as the will of Allah that is beginninglessly linked with things, and based on that, it is eternal. Some said that ordainment and decree are one and the same: Allah's bringing things into being according to the linkage of His knowledge and power. The reality of the matter is that what the Ash'arīs called decree, the Māturīdīs called ordainment, and vice versa. (*Ṣ*)

[177] Minute matters with respect to the creation [*khafiyāt*] are the problematic and obscure things. With respect to Allah, they are not, because He knows all things in detail. (*F*)

it is either obligatory or recommended. If it was within the realm of customary matters, it is legally neutral. The Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them—did not approve of anything false, so it follows that none of them opposed the commands of our Master, the Sublime and Majestic, who chose them over all of His creation. His choosing them implies that they are to be described with truthfulness and faithfulness, and that He, the Exalted, entrusted them with His revelation.

NOTICE

Al-Zamakhsharī took the view that Jibrīl was better than our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. For that reason, some of the scholars of the Maghreb said: "Al-Zamakhsharī was ignorant of his own school of thought, because the *Mu'tazila* believed that the Prophet ﷺ was better than all of the Prophets and angels."

Included in our statement *Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah* is the belief that incidental human qualities are permissible for them—peace and blessings be upon them—because we attribute our Prophet ﷺ with messengership and not divinity, so it does not entail that incidental human qualities are impossible for him. Incidental human qualities do not detract from their message, prophecy, and lofty rank with Allah, the Exalted. On the contrary, incidental human qualities and their patience with them only increase them in rank.

In conclusion, it is now clear to you how the two testimonies—despite the small number of letters they contain—gather all the doctrines of faith that a legally responsible person must believe in regarding Allah, the Exalted, and His Messengers—peace and blessings be upon them. Perhaps the Sacred Law made it, due to its brevity and all that it contains, a summary of the faith found in the heart.

CHAPTER VII

7.0 The Meaning of *Īmān* and *Islam*

The majority of the Māturīdīs and some of the verifying scholars of the Ash'arīs believed that *īmān* and Islam are synonymous. The majority of the Ash'arīs took the view that they are distinct from each other because the legal meaning of *īmān* is the heart's conviction [*taṣdīq*][178] in everything the Prophet ﷺ brought from the things known in the religion by necessity,' which means compliance and submission to it.[179]

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[178] This conviction necessitates two matters: attributing the Prophet ﷺ with truthfulness, and inner compliance with what the Prophet relayed, which some scholars call the "urging or encouraging of the self" [*ḥadīth al-nafs*] that follows sure knowledge. Having said this, conviction is not merely the statement that the Prophet ﷺ is truthful, contrary to how some ignorant crass literalists portray the way of *Ahl al-Sunna*. (*F*)

[179] Imam al-Sa'd al-Taftazānī said in his commentary upon *al-'Aqā'id al-Nasafiyya*: "The majority of the verifying scholars took the position that it—faith—is the conviction of the heart, and that outward confession of it is only a condition on which the worldly judgments [as to whether one is a believer or not] are passed, since conviction is by the heart, therefore it is a hidden matter which must have a sign. So then whoever has conviction with his heart and does not confess with his tongue, then he is a believer with Allah, even though he is not [a believer] according to the legal judgments of this world; but whoever confesses with his tongue and does not have conviction with his heart—like the hypocrite—he is just the opposite. This is the chosen position of Shaykh Abū Manṣūr [al-Māturīdī]—may Allah have mercy upon him—and the Divine texts support this position. Allah, the Exalted said: ❮*They are those in whose hearts He has written faith.*❯ And He said: ❮*His heart being tranquil with faith.*❯ And He said: ❮*Faith has yet to enter into your hearts.*❯ The Prophet ﷺ said: 'O Allah! Keep my heart firm upon Your religion.' He ﷺ also said to Usāma b. Zayd when the latter killed a man who said *There is no god but Allah*: 'Did you split open his chest?'"

You should know that the disagreement between *Ahl al-Sunna* in this matter is minor. Regarding their opponents from the other sects, such as those who say that works are included in the basis of faith, Imam al-Ḥalīmī verified this matter in his book *al-Minhāj*, and his conclusions can be found there. Those who held that view relied upon general statements made in the Sacred Law mentioning works being from faith, Within the Sacred Law, the meaning of Islam is compliance with the [Divine] commands and abstinence from the prohibitions based upon surrender of the heart. *Īmān* and Islam are two distinct concepts, even if they are both legally inseparable. There is no Muslim who is not a believer [*mu'min*] and there is no believer who is not a Muslim.

NOTICE

If the word "Islam" is used to express the heart's surrender, acceptance, and compliance, it is synonymous with *īmān*; if it is used to express the meaning of outward actions such as prayer, fasting, Hajj, articulation of the two testimonies of faith and other actions, it is distinct from *īmān*—even if both are legally inseparable.[180] This elucidation is the truth.

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such as the prayer, Zakat, and other things. The verified position is that this refers back to the linguistic usage [of the word "faith"]. The phrase "He believed," followed by the governing particle *bā*, such as in the verse: ❮*Those who believe in* [*bi*] *the unseen...*❯ and ❮*And those who believe* [*bi*] *in what has been revealed to you and what has been revealed before you...*❯ means the conviction of the heart, which is the meaning of faith. The word "believe" followed by the transitive *lām* particle means to follow, submit, and comply, as found in the verse: ❮*They said: "Shall we believe in you* [*laka*] *while the lowly ones follow you?"*❯ Based upon this, if it is said in the Sacred Law that prayer is faith, it means that it is faith *for* Allah [*īmān li-llāh*], i.e., compliance with Him, the Exalted. In its use within the Sacred Law, faith is divided into two categories: faith *in* Allah [*īmān bi-llāh*], and faith *for* Allah [*imān li-llāh*]. Since it is two categories, it is not permissible to put them both under one definition; rather, both of them must have their own unique definition. Faith *in* Allah [*īmān bi-llāh*] is conviction, and it is the meaning of the word "faith" when generally used. Faith *for* Allah [*īmān li-llāh*] is compliance with Him, the Exalted, with the condition of faith in Him [*īmān bi-llāh*] and this is the meaning of Islam. Those who include actions with conviction under the same name [i.e., faith] did not notice this distinction, not to mention the many corrupt implications it contains that are mentioned in the more detailed and lengthy books. (*F*)

[180] This means that one cannot go without the other. The one who believes in his heart and has internal surrender is not pardoned in the Sacred Law from the other legal obligations such as prayer, Zakat, Hajj, and so on. Furthermore, the one who prays and carries out the other

Īmān has been explained as the self's urging [*ḥadīth al-nafs*] that follows sure knowledge. The self's urging means surrender, acceptance, compliance, and internal submission—all of this is one meaning. Believing in the Prophet ﷺ in all that he brought from Allah, and submitting, surrendering, and complying with him in one's heart is a distinct form of conviction, and it is not the same as mere confirmation that the Prophet ﷺ was truthful, devoid of surrender, or compliance. Based upon this *īmān* and Islam are synonymous.

The takeaway from this is that belief in the Prophet ﷺ in all that he brought from Allah, followed by inner surrender and compliance, is Islam and *īmān*. As for the outward actions such as prayer, fasting, and articulating the two testimonies of faith, that is Islam.

Faith is not accepted from the disbeliever who is capable of articulating the two testimonies of faith unless he actually articulates them. As for the Muslim who was born into Islam, his faith is sound even if he does not articulate the two testimonies, even though he would be disobedient for not articulating them because it is obligatory at least once in one's lifetime.[181]

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outward obligations, yet does not have the foundation of belief in him, all of his acts are in vain because of his disbelief. The first one—who believes but does not perform works—is disobedient and not a disbeliever and his reckoning is with Allah. According to us, if we do not see him perform anything from the actions of Islam, or hear him testify with the two testimonies of faith, then we judge him with disbelief outwardly and leave his inward state to Allah, the Exalted. In addition to this, it is not permissible for us to say regarding a particular person that he is a believer [*mu'min*] and not a Muslim, or that he is a Muslim and not a believer; this is what it means when it is said that they are legally inseparable. (*F*)

[181] The ruling of disbelief here is according to what is apparent. As for the children of the believers, the agreed upon position is that it is not a condition or stipulation. This is similar to the case of the one who is unable to articulate it. They are all judged with faith even if they do not express it in the first place. Of course, it is obligatory for them to articulate it in the prayer and not outside of it—contrary to the view of Imam Mālik ؒ who said that it is obligatory upon them to articulate it at least once, like the praise [saying: *al-ḥamdulillāh*] and the prayer and salutations upon the Prophet ﷺ. (*B*)

It is not a condition for the disbeliever to use the words *I bear witness*, nor is it a condition for him to negate or affirm. Rather, it is enough for him to say *Allah is One and Muhammad is His Messenger.*[182]

The most correct view regarding the issue of faith is that it is the conviction of the heart only.[183] Articulating the two testimonies of faith is only a condition for applying the rulings of Islam upon someone,[184] such as the bath, the funeral prayer,

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From this you can gather that what the main text mentions above is only according to the juridical school of Imam Mālik and not that of our Imam, Imam al-Shāfiʿī ؓ. (*F*)

[182] This is according the juridical school of Imam Mālik. According to Imam al-Shāfiʿī and most of the jurists and Shāfiʿīs; however, it is not enough for one to merely say that Allah is One and that Muhammad is His Messenger. There must be an articulation of affirmation and negation. This is the relied upon position with the Shāfiʿīs. As for the Mālikīs, the relied upon position is mentioned above in the main text. (*B*)

[183] You should know that the meaning of conviction entails compliance and it is not simply ascribing truthfulness to the Prophet ﷺ. Inner compliance is enough for that; however, it does not mean that other actions are not obligatory—contrary to what some foolish and crass anthropomorphists imagine. The other actions are obligatory, but are not a condition for the validity of faith [*sharṭ ṣiḥḥa*]. (*F*)

[184] The opinion that articulating the two testimonies is a condition for the validity of faith is a weak view. The view that it is a stipulation—even though it also contains weakness—is stronger. The more correct view is that it is a condition on which the worldly judgments [as to whether one is a believer or not] are passed, and in reality, it is a condition for faith's perfection [*sharṭ kamāl*]. As such, whoever complies within his heart and does not articulate with his tongue (as long as it is not obstinate refusal) then he is a saved believer; however, the worldly judgments [that pertain to Muslims] are not applied to him, such as burial in the graveyard of the Muslims and the funeral prayer upon him. The point of disagreement is with regards to the original disbeliever [who was born to disbelieving parents]. (*B*)

What this means is that he is considered a Muslim internally and a disbeliever externally: externally according to what we see from him and in accordance with the rulings of the Sacred Law that Allah has obliged us to follow, and internally because Allah, the Exalted, knows that he is in himself a believer, for He knows the inward and what burial in the graveyards of the Muslims, and so on. If a disbeliever has conviction with his heart and does not articulate it with his tongue, he is a believer with Allah, the Exalted. If, however, he was requested to articulate the two testimonies and he refused, his inner conviction will not benefit him (unless he was unable to speak). The upshot of this is that the one who refuses and refrains from articulating [the testimony of faith] is a disbeliever—and the one who is unable to speak is excused.[185]

The intelligent person must see to it that he frequently mentions the statement of Divine oneness, for that is highly recommended. When remembering this statement one must bring to mind all of the doctrines of faith that it contains so its meanings can mix within the flesh and blood. The one who remembers it shall see the secrets of good inward religious character, such as renunciation, reliance—which is the confidence of the heart with Allah, the Exalted—shyness, exaltation of Allah, the Exalted, and other religious matters. He who remembers it shall also see marvellous and manifest saintly gifts that are gained by remembrance of this phrase. Those things

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is even more concealed, whereas as it concerns us, we have been commanded to deal with people according to what is outwardly apparent. (*F*)

[185] According to the Shāfiʿīs, faith is conditioned upon bearing witness, negating, affirming, knowing the meaning [of the testimony of faith] (even if in a general sense) and ensuring that it is said in proper order. The relied upon view is that if someone says it in reverse order, he will not be considered a Muslim. Other conditions include saying it completely without gap, and that the one saying it be a sane adult. Based upon this, the Islam of an insane person is invalid, as is the Islam of a young child unless he is following his parents who say it as well [*tabʿan*]. Another condition is that the one saying it avoids manifesting anything that negates compliance—so the Islam of someone who is prostrating to an idol is invalid if he is testifying while doing that act.

For one's testimony to be valid, it must also be said out of free will. Thus, the Islam of someone who is compelled is invalid unless he is an apostate or belligerent enemy [*ḥarbī*], for in that case, compulsion is in something that is right. If his disbelief was because of denying something unanimously agreed to be from the religion by necessity or by declaring licit that which is unlawful, he must reject that which he previously declared licit and accept what he previously denied. (*B*) only occur for the one who remembers it with the intention of servitude and sincerity for Allah, the Exalted. He who engages in remembrance must not intend with his works the longing for saintly gifts or others things, for that will make his acts of worship like scattered dust and he will not obtain that after which he is seeking.

Enabling grace [*tawfiq*][186] is by Allah. There is no Lord or anything worthy of worship besides Him. We ask Him, the Glorified and Exalted, to make us and our loved ones among those who say—with true knowledge—the testimony of faith at the time of our death. May Allah send blessings upon our liege lord Muhammad each time he is mentioned by those who engage in remembrance, and each time he is not mentioned by the heedless.

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[186] In his commentary on *The Foundational Proofs*, the erudite scholar al-Hudhudī said: "Enabling grace [*tawfiq*] is the creation of obedience. It has been said that it is the creation of the ability to obey within the servant." The verifying scholar and erudite al-Sharqāwī commented on his words, saying: "His statement 'the creation of obedience' is the definition of Imam al-Ḥaramayn [al-Juwaynī] and it is given more priority than [the definition of] those after him who ascribed themselves to al-Ash'arī because it [*tawfiq*] is taken from the word *wifāq* [agreement]. That which is created within the servant is therefore in agreement with what is sought from him in the Sacred Law. Direct agreement is only through the act of obedience and not the ability granted [for its performance]. Furthermore, the creation of the ability to obey is found even within the disbeliever, yet despite that, he is not one who is granted enabling grace. Some have responded to this objection and argued that ability is an accident [*'araḍ*] that is connected with obedience, which is not found within the disbeliever because there is no obedience within him. The meaning of it [*tawfiq*] is not the soundness of the means, as is understood by the opponent."

May Allah, out of His bounty and pure largesse, grant us and all of the Muslims success in accordance with His commands and prohibitions—by the rank of the noblest of His Messengers and His most honoured creation, our liege lord and master Muhammad. May Allah send peace and blessings upon him, his progeny, and his Companions. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds! (*F*)

May Allah be pleased with all of the Companions of the Messenger as well as the Followers, and those who followed them with excellence until the Last Day. Peace be upon all of the Messengers, and all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

—Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Foudah
26 Muḥarram, 1411
17TH August 1990

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These are some of the titles that have been published:

- Aṣḥāb al-Nār wa-Maṣīruhum
- Buḥūth fī ʿIlm al-Kalām
- Bayān al-Zāʾif min Mughālatāt Amīn Nāyif
- Al-Taḥbīr fī Tafsīr Thalātha Āyāt min al-Dhikr al-Ḥakīm
- Taʿīd al-Manṭiq
- ***Tahdhīb Sharḥ al-Sanūsiyya* [*Umm al-Barāhīn*]**
- Hāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ Ṣughrā al-Ṣughrā lil-Imām al-Sanūsī fī ʿIlm al-Tawḥīd
- Ḥusn al-Muḥājaja fī Bayāṇ ʿan Allah lā Dākhil al-ʿĀlam wa-lā Khārijahu
- *Rafʿa al-Ishtibāh ʿan Kulliyya Lafẓ al-Ilāh*
- Ruḥ al-Uṣūl fī ʿIlm al-Uṣūl
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- Al-Farq al-ʿAẓīm bayna al-Tanzīh wal-Tajsīm
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Edited and annotated:

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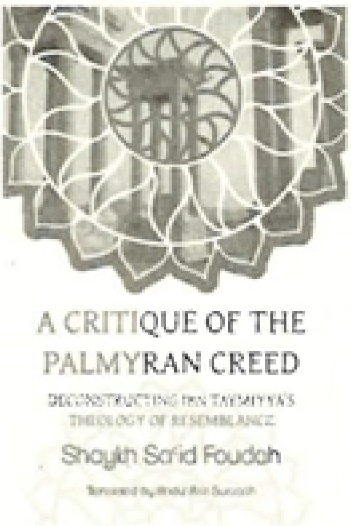
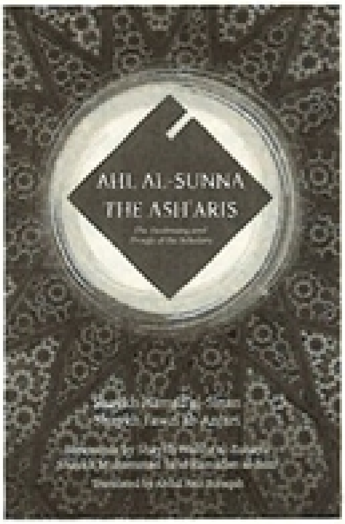


How astounding are
Allah's affairs in creation
Each person finds facilitation
for what he was created to be

Perhaps one of the most controversial scholars of the classical era, Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya's works in theology have been promoted by the modern day *Salafi* movement as an accurate representation of the creed of the predecessors [*salaf*]. In *The Palmyran Creed*, named after the ancient city of Palmyra (Tadmur, Syria), Ibn Taymiyya presents the foundations of his theology, expounds upon its principles and offers his arguments in support of it. At the heart of this lies his claim of affirming only what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ affirmed of the Divine attributes [*sifat*], "without inquiring into the modality [*takyif*], drawing likeness [*tamthil*], or engaging in alteration [*tahrif*] and denial [*ta'til*]," ostensibly purifying Divine Oneness [*tawhid*].

In his critique of the *Palmyran Creed*, renowned contemporary theologian Shaykh Sa'id Foudah clinically refutes Ibn Taymiyya's claim, demonstrating that it could not be further from the truth. The Taymiyyan theology of resemblance [*tashbih*] is deconstructed and the anthropomorphic premises [*tajsim*] for what Ibn Taymiyya considers to be the reality and attributes of Allah are revealed. Shaykh Sa'id establishes, rationally and textually, that ascriptions such as hands, eyes, face, shin, movement, direction, change, spatial contact, limits and boundaries are inconceivable with respect to Allah, and that nothing can possibly share in His reality. This ground breaking work elevates contemporary Muslim discourse beyond superficial polemics and into deeper realms of the rational sciences.

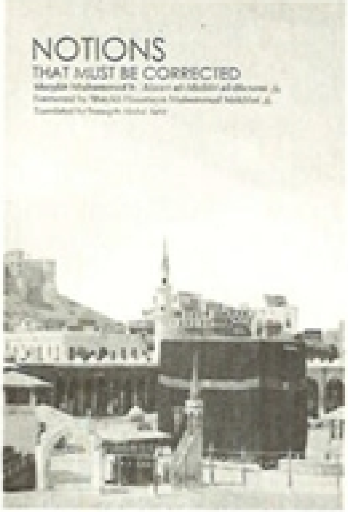


AHL AL-SUNNA
THE ASH'ARIS

In an age in which intra-Muslim religious argumentation dominates, heterodox groups have tried and had great success in presenting their beliefs as normative Islam to the average lay Muslim. Unfortunately many of these beliefs are largely at odds with the classical articulations of Sunni orthodoxy throughout the ages.

This work, *Ahl al-Sunna: The Ash'aris*, aims to remedy this problem. Drawing from the works of Islam's greatest scholars through the centuries, Shaykh Hamad al-Sinan and Shaykh Fawzi al-'Anjari detail the genesis, rise, beliefs, and contributions of the Ash'ari school of theology, and address—in a refreshingly fair-minded and non-sectarian way—common misconceptions about the Ash'ari school and demonstrate how its rich religious discourse is firmly anchored in the Qur'an, the Sunna, the way of the Companions, and sound reasoning.

> The book in front of us is a useful and blessed endeavour that clarifies what Shaykh al-Islam and Imam amongst the Imams, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari, was upon: a creed free from anthropomorphism or negation of Allah's attributes. His was indeed the creed of the pious predecessors [*Salaf*]. Through its compelling arguments, numerous scholarly quotes, and discussions by prominent scholars, *Ahl al-Sunna: The Ash'aris* succeeds in its aim, and is added to the long list of works compiled by Hadith scholars and theologians who defended Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari, such as Ibn 'Asakir's *Tabyin Kadhib al-Muftari* (Clarifying the Lie of the Calumniator), al-Bayhaqi's declaration in the beginning of his compilation on belief entitled *al-I'tiqad*, and others... May Allah reward the two authors with goodness for their eagerness through this work to defend the tenets of faith upheld by the vast majority of Muslims.
>
> —*Shaykh Husayn 'Abd al-'Ali*

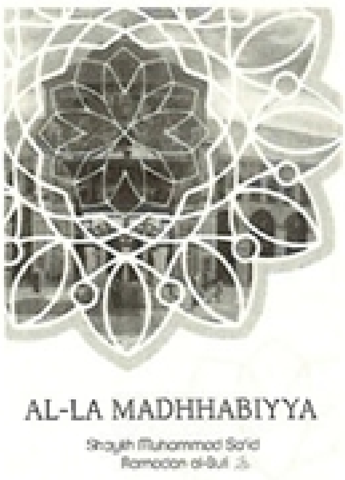


NOTIONS
THAT MUST BE CORRECTED

Notions That Must Be Corrected is perhaps the most important and renowned work of the renowned scholar of the Hijaz, Shaykh Muhammad b. ʿAlawi al-Maliki al-Hasani ﷺ. Throughout his masterpiece the author offers valuable and wise words of caution against extremism and invites the Muslims to the path of *Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jamaʿa*, the hallmark of which is tolerance and moderation. Sayyid Muhammad expertly clarifies the correct position relating to numerous 'controversial' contemporary topics whilst maintaining strict adherence to the Qur'an, the Sunna, and the way of the *Salaf*.

The book itself has been divided into three parts, the first of which is concerned with areas of research relating to Islamic doctrine, including clarifying the criterion for imputing others with disbelief and misguidance, as well as concepts such as intermediation and intercession. The second section deals with issues relating to the Prophet ﷺ, including his unique characteristics, the reality of prophecy, the reality of humanity, and the correct understanding of seeking blessings from the Prophet ﷺ and his relics. The final part deals with miscellaneous areas of research including the Isthmus [*barzakh*] life, the legality of visiting the Prophet ﷺ, and other related matters such as relics, sanctuaries, and festive religious occasions.

Scores of Islamic scholars hailing from all parts of the world wrote commendations for this work, while many more have taught from it, or written about it in their articles. The huge positive impact the book made in Islamic circles unfortunately led to hardship for the noble Shaykh in his home country due to misguided verdicts levelled against him. Numerous vicious personal attacks and baseless replies from those who opposed the Sunni methodology were also published. In response to this, leading scholars throughout the world vehemently defended the noble Shaykh and wrote extensive and decisive refutations of his detractors.



AL-LA MADHHABIYYA

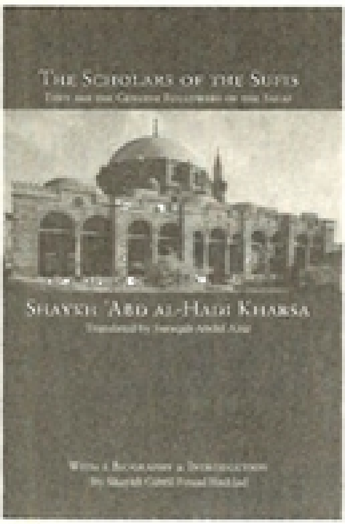
Shaykh Muhammad Sa'id Ramadan al-Buti

In the last century, a movement has appeared calling for the abandonment of the traditional schools of law [*madhahib*]. This misleading call, which scholars have termed *al-la madhhabiyya*, was presented as 'following the Qur'an and the Sunna' and caused much confusion amongst ordinary muslims.

One of the sources for the spread of this innovation was a book written by Muhammad Sultan al-Ma'sumi al-Khajnadi al-Makki, which was translated and distributed to English and published as as 'Should a Muslim Follow a Particular Madhhab?' and 'The Blind Following of Madhhabs'.

It was in response to this book, taught and revered by prominent opponents of the schools of law, that Shaykh al-Buti first wrote his ground breaking work. Later editions of this work, the translation of which we have before us, included the aftermath of various debates Shaykh al-Buti was subsequently challenged to by his opponents and also incorporated counter-replies to the likes of Shaykh Nasir al-Din al-Albani, Muhammad 'Id 'Abbasi, Mahmud Mahdi al-Istanbuli and Khayr al-Din Wanli.

This book is a decisive refutation of those who call to the misguidance of abandoning the schools of law, for it is the most dangerous innovation threatening the Sacred Law.



The translation and publication of the present book, *'Ulama' al-Sufiyya Hum al-Salafiyya al-Haqiqiyyun*, is a welcome event for seekers of spiritual guidance and self-purification in our time.

This praiseworthy effort offers to the English-speaking public a contemporary explanation of the immutable principles of Sufism, which are one and the same with the three principles of Religion: submission [*islam*], faith [*iman*], and excellence [*ihsan*].

The book contains Shaykh 'Abd al-Hadi's carefully presented anthology of the wisdom of the Sufi masters of old and their summations of doctrine ['*aqida*] and of the various spiritual diseases and spiritual stations and states of the wayfarer. They were gleaned from the bio-sapiental classics of the genre such as *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, the *Luma'*, the *Risala*, the *Ihya'*, and can be found in later works such as *Tabaqat al-Awliya'* and *al-Kawakib al-Durriyya fi Tarajim al-Sufiyya*.

The vehemence of the title—shown in the emphatic-exclusive personal pronoun and translatable as *The Scholars of the Sufis*: [*Only*] *They are the Genuine Followers of the Salaf*!—is a reminder of the tireless efforts of the last two hundred years of Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a scholarship demonstrating the Islamic orthodoxy of *tasawwuf* and denouncing the heresy of Wahhabism and pseudo-Salafism.

It is its unique gems that make *'Ulama' al-Sufiyya* stand out such as, for example, the title's emphasis on knowledge: it is never about the Sufis at large but about their Gnostics; as for would-be-Sufi [*mutasawwif*] claimants who are nescient of the Sacred Law or not even concerned by it: they are also heretics and completely undesirable no matter how big they grow their beard, turban, *jubba*, or voice! This is a theme stressed by many of our *salaf al-salih* (pious predecessors).

—Shaykh Gibril Fouad Haddad

A Refined Explanation *of*
THE SANUSI CREED
The Foundational Proofs

تهذيب شرح السنوسية
أم البراهين

Shaykh Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Foudah

Foreword & Author's Bibliography *by*
Shaykh Galāl ʿAlī ʿĀmer al-Jihānī

Translated *by* Abdul Aziz Suraqah

A Refined Explanation of
THE SANUSI CREED
The Foundational Proofs
Shaykh Saʿid Foudah

The Foundational Proofs of Imam al-Sanusi is one of the foundational works in Islamic theology and is considered historically as an elemental text in traditional Islamic education. Studied for centuries and memorized by children throughout the Islamic world, *The Foundational Proofs* offers readers a methodical outline of Islamic doctrine that satisfies the mind and the heart alike. In this age of mass confusion and intellectual malaise, where fundamental Islamic beliefs are misunderstood and credulity is championed as faith, *The Foundational Proofs* explains the tenets of faith and supports them both rationally and textually.

Further enhancing the value of this work is the engaging and relevant additions of Shaykh Saʿid Foudah, one of the world's leading Islamic theologians today, who presents Imam al-Sanusi's work with the interlineal commentary of Imam Ahmad b. ʿIsa al-Ansari and engaging and detailed footnotes collated from a variety of famous commentaries, such as those by Imam al-Bajuri, Imam al-Battawi, Imam al-Sawi, Imam al-Marghani, and others, as well as his own insightful comments.

> "One of the most important tasks for a person to engage in is earnest research into the doctrines of the Islamic faith. That is because the religion of Islam is based upon proofs and sound evidence; it does not contradict science or violate the fundamentals of rationality. Fundamentally, the religion of Islam is based upon rationality, and while it is true that it does not ignore the emotional aspect of religion, faith that is not grounded in the intellect is not considered perfect faith, nor is it capable of withstanding or confronting false beliefs, specious arguments, or the doubts that are spread in each age. Here Shaykh Saʿid Foudah has taken it upon himself to explicate the foundational beliefs of Islam and tenets of faith as based on the intellect, and to demonstrate their congruity with and non-contradiction to the sciences of logic and science."
>
> —*Shaykh Galal al-Jihani*

ISBN 978-90-79294-27-5
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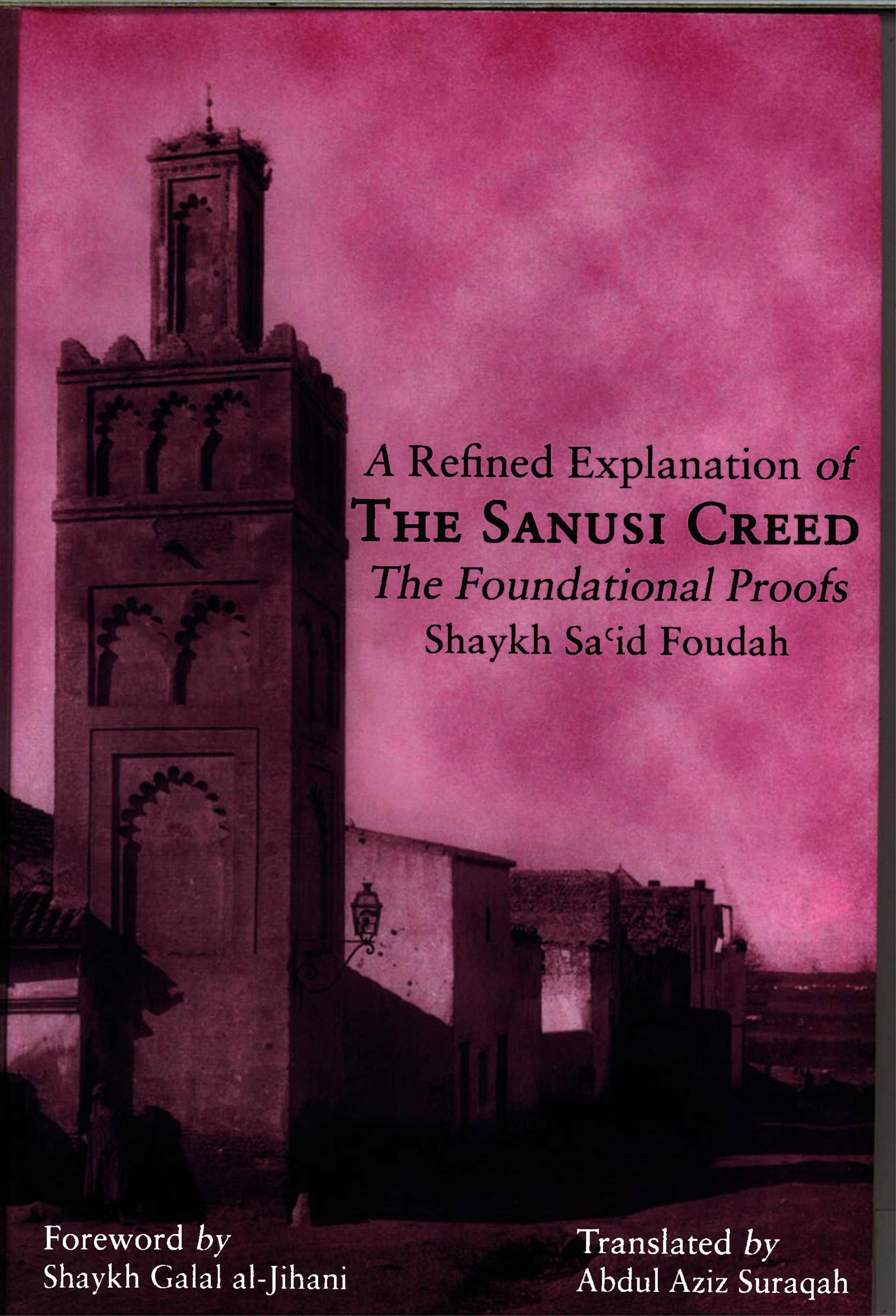

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